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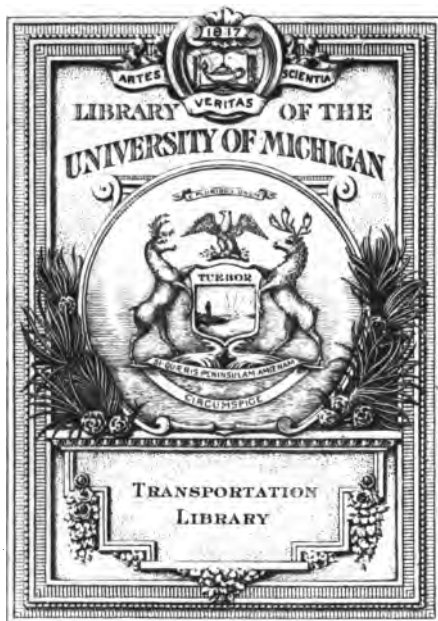
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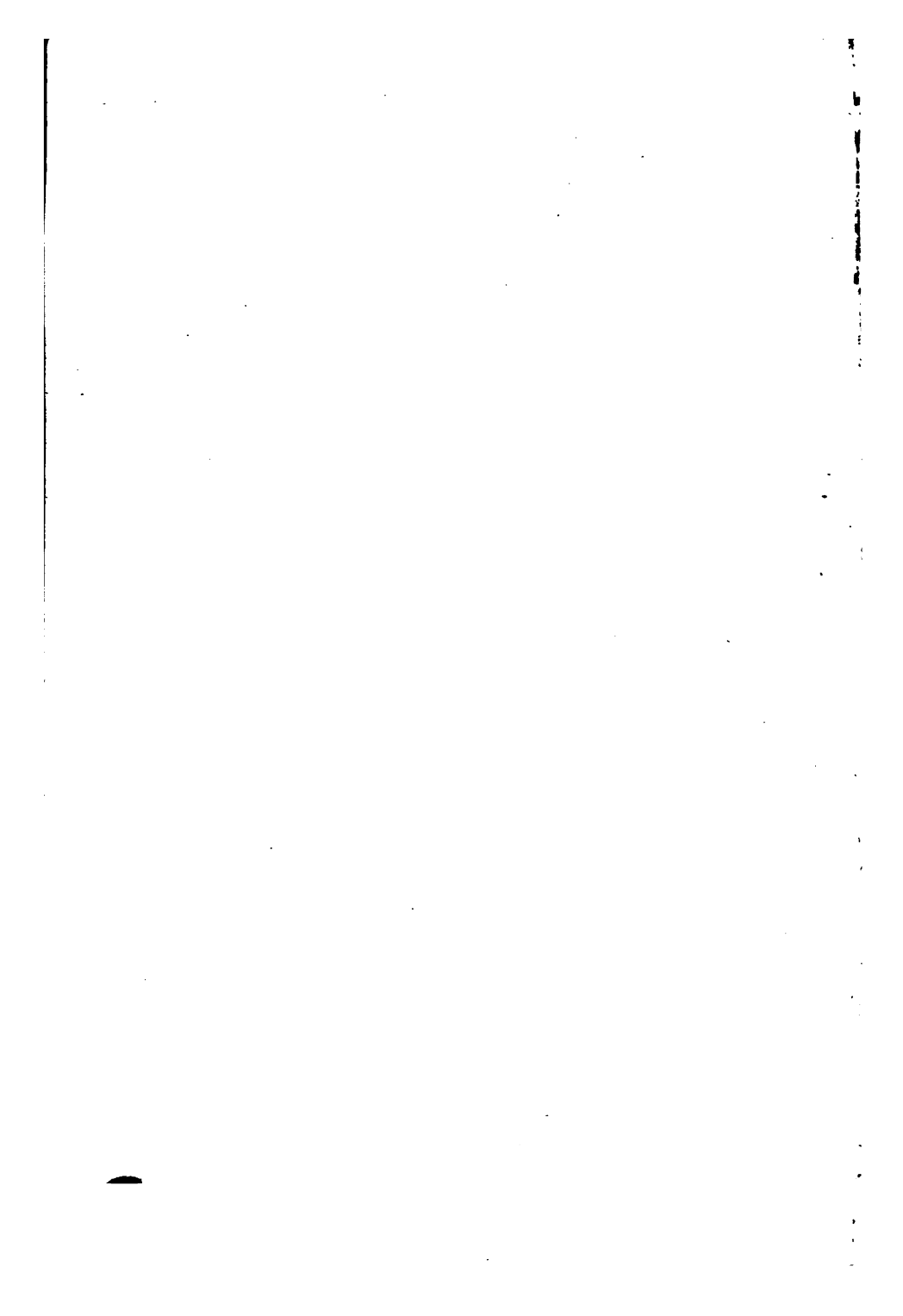
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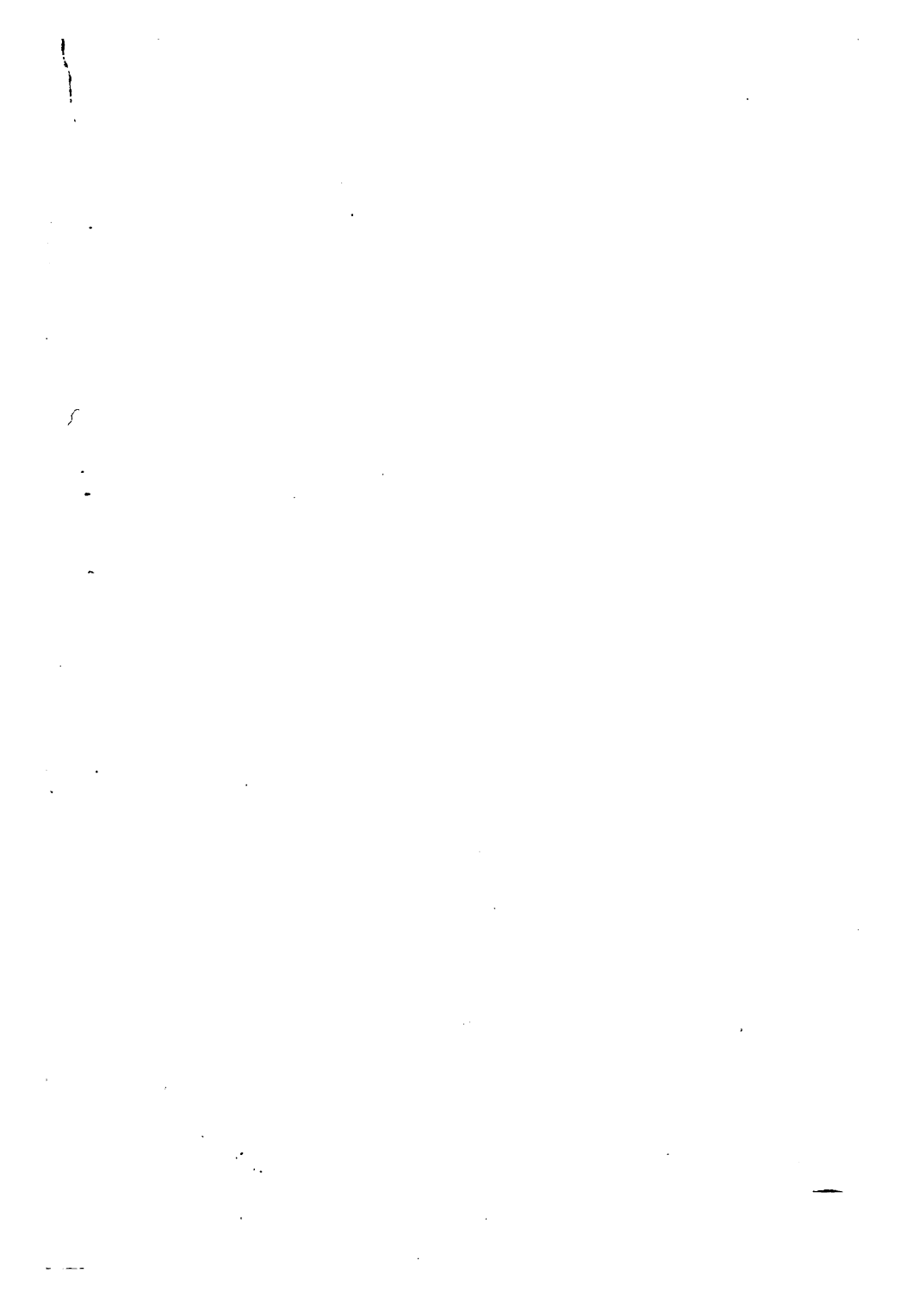


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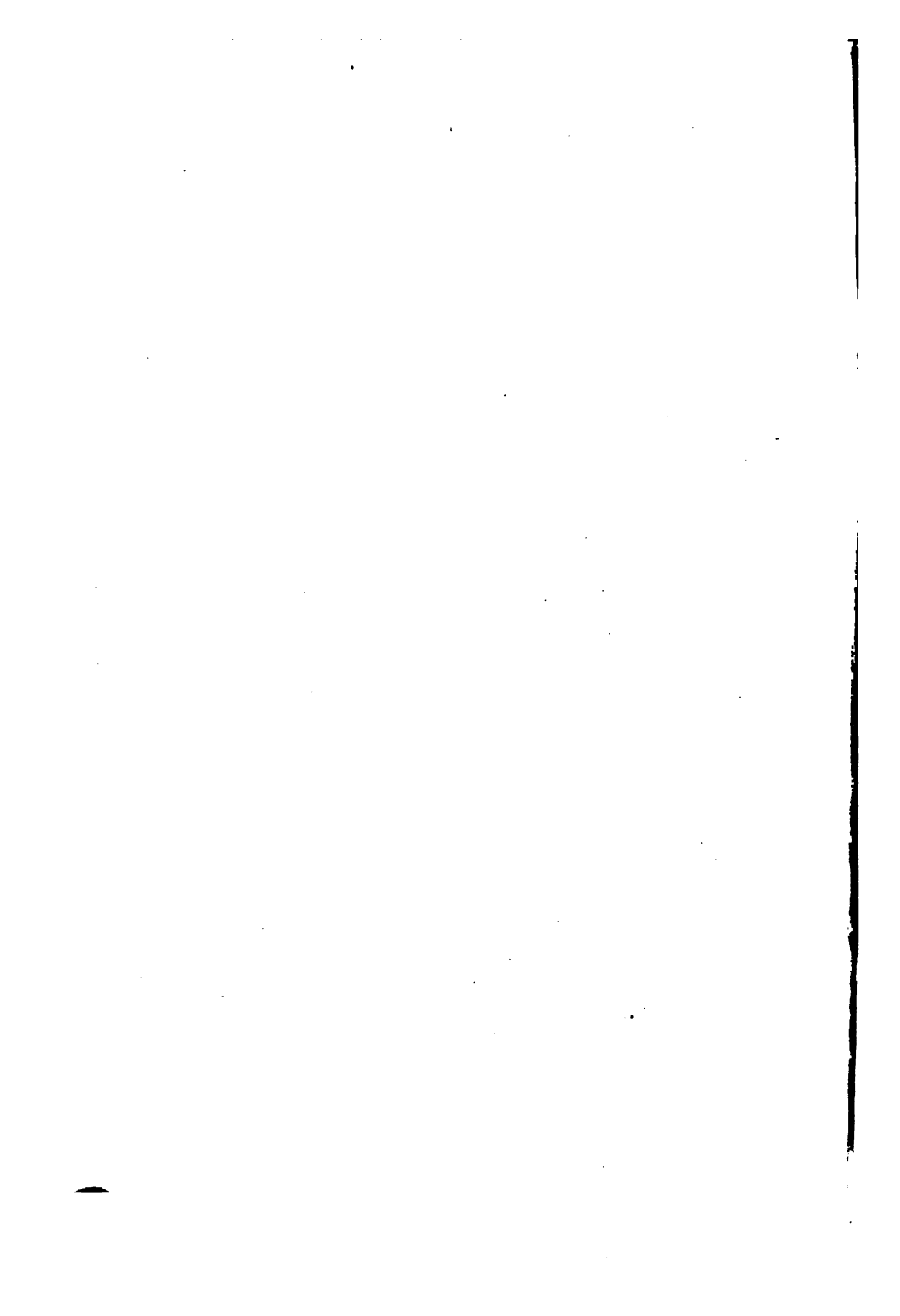


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T O M K E E N A N
LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER



12



TOM KEENAN

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER

**A Story of fifty years on
the rail as told by himself**

**Compiled by
NEASON JONES**



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*To Railroad Men
The World Over
Among Whom are Some
Of the Brightest Gems
of God's Making
this book
Is Affectionately Dedicated*



Preface

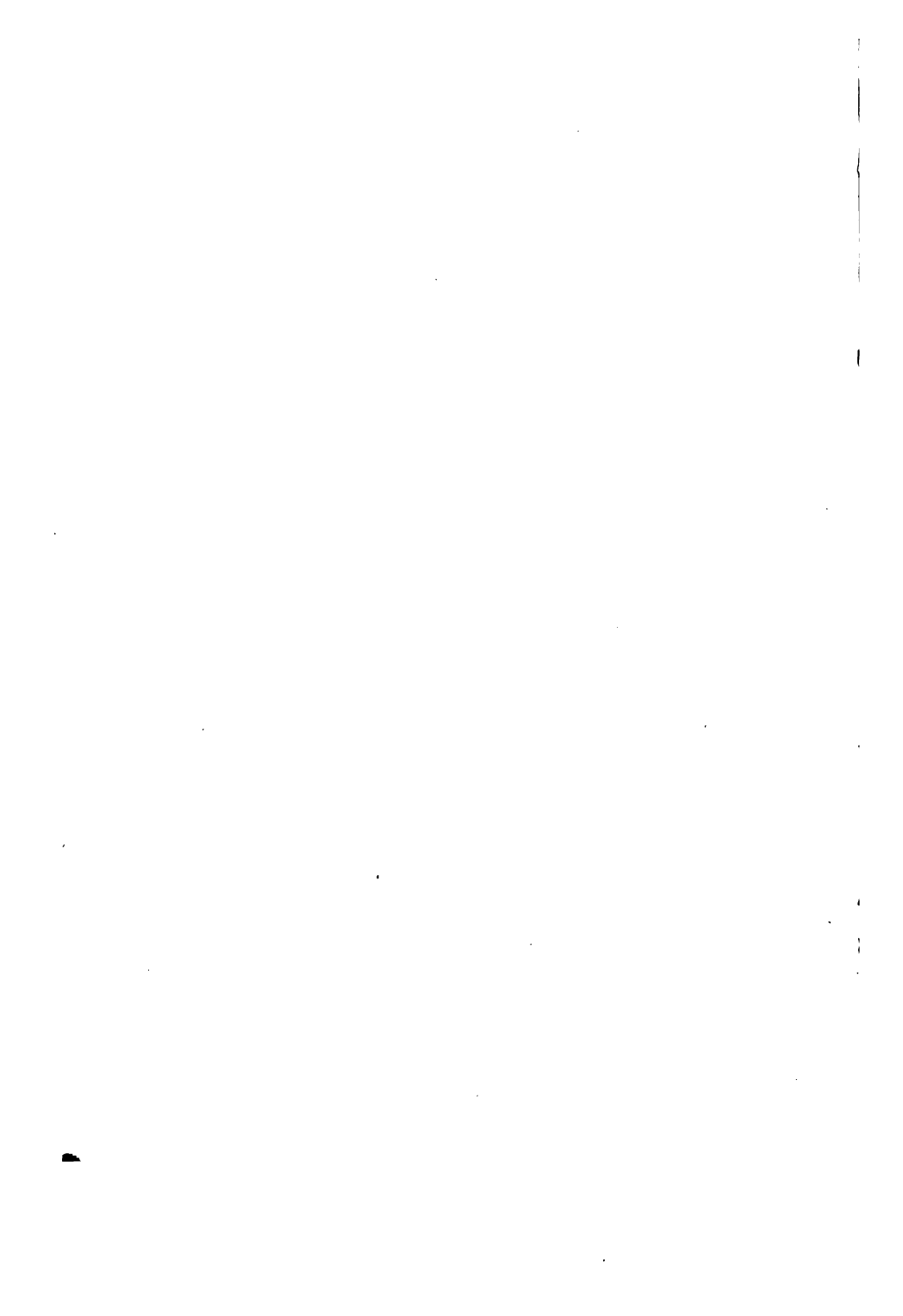
IN dispatching the train of thought contained in the following pages, it is the writer's purpose to preserve in permanent form the life story of a most unique character, as well as to demonstrate the remarkable transformation that has been effected in the lives of railroad men during the past thirty years. There are no less than one million men engaged upon the railroads of the United States and Canada.

Tom Keenan is well-known to thousands of railroad men on the North American continent. He has just completed fifty years of service in the employ of one of the large railroad systems, twenty years of which he has been intimately known to the author, who has thus become familiar with the scenes and incidents which form the basis of this story and are here told in the characteristic style and as from the lips of Tom Keenan.

That the story of this life may prove inspiring and helpful to the thousands of railroad men, and others, who are striving to do right in the midst of adverse conditions, is the sincere wish of the author.

NEASON JONES.

*Mount Vernon, N. Y.,
September 1, 1904.*



Contents

I

ON THE SCRAP HEAP

- A Visit to the Doctor and its Result—Some Reflections of Youth—A Start with a Handicap . . . 15

II

INITIATED

- An Account of Some Early Railroad Experiences—Discharged—Promoted to Fireman—I Meet Mira 22

III

A WEDDING AND A TRAGEDY

- I Become an Engineer—Courting under Difficulties—First Religious Impressions—Married—An Unexpected Bath—The Tragedy of My Father 33

IV

A BANTER AND ITS RESULTS

- Off for California—Crossing the Isthmus—Railroading on the Sierras—Home Again . . . 45

V

SEEING THE ELEPHANT

- Expelled from the Brotherhood—A Fishing Trip and a Scrimmage—Arrested and Locked Up—Kind Words from a Master Mechanic and a Superintendent 57

VI

CONVICTED

- At the Death-bed of an Engineer—A Decision and
an Obligation—"I Wish Papa was a Good
Man"—A Wife's Plea 84

VII

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

- A Visit from a Brother Engineer—"Oh, Lord! I
Mean Business"—The Skeleton in the Closet
—I go to Church—A Forty-Five Miles an
Hour Conversion 96

VIII

COUNTING THE COST

- Another Barroom Incident—Persecution—A Hotel
Landlord Converted—An Engine with two
Headlights 108

IX

VICTORY

- A Postal Card with a History—"Oh, What a
Prayer!"—A Freight House Meeting—The
Way to Heaven 121

X

A FAMOUS REVIVAL

- "Out of De Fryin' Pan Into De Fire"—Awaken-
ing Among Railroad Men at Port Morris—A
Railroad Men's Praying Band—"Watts"
Day—Beginning of a New Era 135

XI

HUNTING AND FISHING

- Smoking Versus Hunting—The Sleep of Peace—
Convincing a Lawyer—Fishing for His Soul 151

Contents

11

XII

INFIDELS

- An Interview with the President of an Infidel Club
—Another with One Who Wanted to Know
Where Cain Got His Wife—An Engineer
Who Tried to be an Infidel . . . 165

XIII

CHARMED

- A Bird Charmed by a Snake—Causes of the Down-
fall of Railroad Men—A Wreck and its Sad
Sequel . . . 183

XIV

DOWN IN TEXAS

- Held Up—Holding the Fort in a Meeting-House
—An Enjoyable Hunting Experience—A
Second Visit to Texas Reveals Improved
Conditions Among Railroad Men—One
Scholar; Five Teachers . . . 197

XV

EUGENE'S MESSAGE

- The Downward Steps in the Life of a Young Man
—Some Sad Experiences—A Death-bed Mes-
sage . . . 214

XVI

MAGGIE

- She Runs an Engine—With Maggie's Children—
Buying "A Black Beauty"—My Horse
Dealing is not a Success—A Visit to the
Deacon and the Story of the Black Horse—
Maggie's Farewell . . . 227

XVII

HEROES

Living Versus Dead Heroes—Some Real Heroes— Bill Swick—Pete Hubbard—Johnny Lewis— Jerry George—Benny Locke—George Rouse	243 .
---	-------

XVIII

A RETROSPECT

Christian Work among Railroad Men—In the Tunnel—Off the Track—"He Lives"	. 270
---	-------

Tom Keenan

Locomotive Engineer

I

ON THE SCRAP HEAP

A visit to the doctor and its result—Some reflections of youth—A start with a handicap.

“**M**IRA, I think I’ve got rheumatism in my right arm. Every time I ‘threw her over’ to-day, it pained me so that I could hardly stand it.”

By easy stages I had come down, from running an express train on the main line to running a main line local; later I was assigned to a mixed train—made up of passenger and freight cars—on a branch line where there was little business; but now for over a year I had been running a switching engine in the railroad yard.

The work of “drilling” or switching cars from one track to another, for the purpose of making them up into trains to be forwarded to different points, necessitates frequent movement of the engine back and forth; which, to the casual observer, seems like a useless expenditure of time and energy.

To "throw her over" means of course, to place the reverse lever in the forward or backward motion, which ever direction it is desired to proceed. This throwing of the lever, or reversing process, particularly when the links and valves are new and unworn, is no easy task.

On a switching engine, the frequency with which the engine must be reversed, during a period of twelve hours, and under the most favourable circumstances, is, to say the least, tiring; and as my arm ached at every movement of the lever, the day had been anything but a pleasant one.

In the natural order of things, I was getting to that period in life when rheumatism generally asserts itself; and while I had resorted to various means, for the maintenance of a youthful appearance, there was no gainsaying the fact that I was getting old.

When the new management assumed control of our road, a few years ago, seeing that the old men were being "side-tracked," or relegated to inferior positions, I decided to accelerate my movements; and in addition went so far as to dye my hair, to hide the gray that was fast becoming white. The dye was not "fast black," however. Getting on and off the engine, and doing my work generally, I became so active that one of the new officials was led to remark one day:

"Why, Keenan, you seem to be about ten

years younger than you were when I came here a year ago."

Notwithstanding my efforts to resist the onslaught of time, old age came upon me with rapid strides, and Mira's reply to my remark in reference to the rheumatism was: "Tom, you ought to see the doctor about it;" and so to the doctor I went.

A careful examination of my arm led the doctor to observe:

"Mr. Keenan, you are worn-out."

"Worn-out," I answered, somewhat perplexed. "What does that mean?"

I had known of steam valves, driving wheel tires and boxes, eccentric straps, truck wheels or other parts of a locomotive—and even the old locomotive itself—becoming worn-out; but it had never occurred to me that the engineer could become worn-out also.

"Yes, Mr. Keenan," the doctor continued, "the ulnar nerve at the point of the elbow in your right arm is worn-out."

"Hold on, doctor," I interrupted, "just make that a little plainer. Do you refer to the 'funny bone' in my elbow?"

The doctor continued: "The tissue surrounding the ulnar nerve, which you call the 'funny bone,' has become so worn that the nerve is irritated by rubbing against the bones of the elbow; so that any heavy work with that arm will cause you pain."

For the purpose of embodying the result of his examination in a report to the superintendent, the doctor went into his private office, leaving me alone in the outer room. Sitting down, I began to reflect on what the term "worn-out" really meant, and what its consequences might be to me. I already knew what it meant in the case of a locomotive; it was simply consigned to the scrap heap, where all worn-out equipment in connection with a railroad eventually rests, to be dismantled at will by order of the master mechanic.

A locomotive,—which, among railroad men, is always designated by the personal pronoun "she"—strange to say, has many weaknesses similar to those of the human body. When the steam valves, which may be called the lungs of the locomotive, through which she breathes, are not set even and true, she is said to be "coughing." If the injector, through which the water is forced from the tank to the boiler, becomes stopped up, she is said to have "heart failure." If a side rod, attached to the driving wheels, becomes disconnected, she is said to be "lame." A cylinder-head is blown out, and she is a "cripple." The boiler foams, and she is "bilious." Should the flues leak so badly as to extinguish the fire, the locomotive is said to be "dead." Any of these defects may be remedied by taking her to the "hospital" as the repair shop is called; even to the resuscitation of a

"dead" locomotive, which after a course of "treatment," and a generous application of paint and polish, comes out again, looking as bright and fresh as the newest engine on the road.

During the absence of the doctor, as I pondered on the various ailments to which a locomotive is subject, I found among them no parallel to my own case of being "worn-out." Under any of the foregoing conditions a locomotive is simply side-tracked until she can be taken to the "hospital," and in the course of time she again comes out on the main track; but in the case of a worn-out engine, the inevitable order of the master mechanic is: "Send her to the scrap heap to be dismantled."

To the railroad man, there is no more pathetic sight in connection with a railroad than the scrap heap; for here in a chaotic mass rests the glory of bygone days. Locomotives that once throbbed with life, like living creatures, the pride of the engineer and fireman who manned them, and the centre of attraction for hundreds of admiring passengers, here lie in various stages of demolition. Pathos is written on the boiler, from which the jacket—as the covering on the boiler is called—has been torn off; pathos on the driving wheels that once gripped the rails, but now lie, one here, another yonder; pathos on the bell, the valves, the cylinder, the smoke-stack; on every piece of equipment that forms the confused mass known as the scrap heap.

It seemed to me, as I waited the doctor's return—which I feared would mean an order consigning me to the scrap heap—that my glory, too, was departing, if not already gone. There was a time when my heart throbbed in unison with the throb of the steam from the cylinders of the iron steed as she flew over the rails, thrilling every nerve and fibre of my being, as I put her to her utmost speed; but now, all this was gone, and for several years the ding-dong-ding of the bell only said: "bread and butter"; the t-o-o-t toot t-o-o-t of the whistle echoed: "bread and butter"; the ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch of the steam, as it escaped from the exhaust pipes through the smoke-stack to the atmosphere, repeated rapidly: "bread and butter, bread and butter, bread and butter"; in other words, I was now following the routine of my daily duties only to provide the necessary means for Mira and me to live.

A vision of the future came before me, and with it I began to see myself as a part of the equipment of the past, lying in the scrap heap, becoming gradually dismembered, another worn-out machine added to the pile.

The revery in which I had been indulging was disturbed by the return of the doctor, who handed me a sealed document addressed to the superintendent, from whom I learned later that it contained such a diagnosis of my case as to justify my worst fears; the only ray of hope in

the whole sad ordeal being the kindly words of the superintendent: "Mr. Keenan, we'll take care of you."

These words of the superintendent referred to the pension fund, a generous provision for the care of its worn-out employees, made a few years ago by the great railroad system where, for nearly fifty years, I have been employed. It meant that Mira and I would still be provided for and saved from the necessity of anxious thought or worry, as well as, possibly, from oblivion.

It will be readily understood, therefore, with what feelings of gratitude and thanksgiving I received soon afterwards a communication from the master mechanic, informing me that a monthly pension, sufficient to provide amply for our necessities, had been granted by the company for the balance of my life, and with it an annual pass, allowing me to travel anywhere on the entire system. I was filled with gratitude that the officials of some of the great railroad corporations have the interest of their worn-out employees so fully at heart as to provide a pension fund by which their last days may be spent happily and in ease; and thanksgiving to God that in the directorate and management of the railroad corporations are men who are actuated by such humane and Christlike motives. May their number be constantly reenforced!

So to the scrap heap I go. And taking my place at the top of this unsightly pile—to which

I am the latest addition—with relics of the past lying all around me, each having its own suggestion of better days, I take pen in hand to jot down some incidents of my somewhat eventful life, which may have at least a passing interest to those who wish to read.

Tokens received from my little grandchildren, annual reminders that I have a birthday, suggest that I first opened my eyes on this mortal sphere, at Liverpool, England, on the 16th of September, 1835.

When I was not quite three years old, my father, who was a miner, came to the United States and settled at Franklin Furnace, Sussex County, New Jersey; where my mother and I, who had been left in England, joined him about a year later.

At Franklin Furnace, we lived in a little yellow house which was still standing, a few years ago, when I had the privilege of visiting the scenes of my childhood. Shortly after our arrival from England, my mother was taken ill and died. A family, named Lewis, lived next door, and the latter kindly cared for me while my father took mother's body and buried it in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Paterson, New Jersey. I would give all I possess could I locate my mother's grave; but, alas, I cannot find it.

My recollections of my mother are very vague, and what little I know of her was learned many years after her death, from Miss Lewis, with

whom she was very intimate, and who saw much of her during her last sickness. It is a source of much comfort to me to learn that my mother possessed those qualities, which endeared her to all who knew her. She had a strong faith in God, and prayed earnestly, before she passed away, that God would bless and protect her boy.

On my father's return from Paterson, he made arrangements for me to board with a family who lived on a farm near by. Here I remained for about a year, when my father married again, and brought me back to the old home.

I remember very well a little red schoolhouse which stood on the hill near our home. Next to the school was an old stone church, and near by was a huge rock from under which there gushed forth a beautiful spring. The rock and spring may be seen there still.

The schools in those days were what were known as select, or pay schools ; but my father, being poor, could not afford to send me ; and consequently I had no educational advantages until after I was ten years old.

Had my own mother lived, she would doubtless have found a way whereby I could have attended school ; with a stepmother, however, it was different, mine being a stepmother indeed in all that the name implies. Inspired by her malice, my father treated me with cruelty, and on one occasion, to save me from his ire, a neighbour with whom I often sought refuge under

similar circumstances, hid me in a barrel of rags.

That I was mischievous is evident from one experience I recall. It was in the carpenter shop of Frank Simpson. I would sometimes go to his shop and use his tools, with the result that when he needed them most the edge was all gone. Catching me at it one day, he grabbed me and locked me in his tool box, leaving me there for half an hour, during which time I could hear them discussing in the shop, whether I would live or not. From their conversation I feared that I would die if allowed to remain much longer, and resolved that if they let me out I would give the shop a wide berth thereafter. They soon did so and Frank Simpson never had his tools dulled by me again.

However unruly I may have been, I could not have deserved at the hands of my stepmother the cruel treatment I received; for on my father's return from work one evening he found my back literally raw from the beating she had given me. I was then about ten years old; so my father decided to send me away from home, and arranged for me to work at the homestead of a wealthy family who lived in that section. Here I remained for over a year, when the family moved to a new mansion which they had built on the banks of the Neversink, near Port Jervis. The family took me with them to their new residence, and what little education I received was acquired

during a stay of some two years with these good people who treated me with the greatest kindness.

I was a harum-scarum lad, and the family, finding that they could do little with me, allowed me to go with an uncle of theirs to his place in Sullivan County where he had ten thousand acres of timber land, on which were several mills. In the mills the timber was cut into logs, which were then carted to Barryville, where they were made into rafts and floated down the Delaware River to Philadelphia.

The duties imposed upon me were so heavy that I ran away, tramping all the way to Port Jervis, where I arrived a homeless and footsore wanderer. For a while I slept under stoops and in packing boxes ; in short any place that offered shelter from the elements.

The New York and Erie Railroad had recently been opened to Port Jervis, and it was at this time that I first saw a locomotive. She was coming down the Shawangunk Mountain, and the sight of this, to my mind, wonderful machine, excited in me such feelings of admiration as destined me, a few years later, to adopt railroading as a career.

At Port Jervis I bound myself to a firm of machinists, for the purpose of learning the machinist trade ; but one member of the firm was so cruel in his treatment of me that I again ran away and started for my old home at Franklin Furnace.

Arriving there, I learned that my father had moved to the Ogden mine above Lake Hopatcong, now known as Edison, New Jersey. When I reached Ogden, I found my father's increasing family, as well as his appetite for strong drink—for I regret to say that, like many of his class, he was a hard drinker—made home so undesirable a place for me, that with a heavy heart I retraced my steps to Port Jervis.

II

INITIATED

An Account of Some Early Railroad Experiences—Discharged—Promoted to Fireman—I Meet Mira.

ON reaching Port Jervis, I “struck a job” as oiler on a freight train on the Delaware Division of the New York and Erie Railroad, running between Port Jervis and Susquehanna, with Conductor Irving. Each freight train, consisting of about twenty-five cars, carried an oiler whose duty it was to look over and oil the journals each time the train stopped. The journal bearings in those days were located inside of the car trucks,—there being no outside bearings as at present—thus making them difficult of access. To oil the journals it was necessary to crawl underneath the cars. This work needed some one who was small and agile; hence I was well adapted for it. Sometimes while underneath a car the train would start, and, jumping on to the brake beam, I would ride to the next station,—a perilous as well as a dusty position.

In addition to my duties as oiler, I was required to keep clean the caboose,—the living-room of the crew when on the road,—and the signal lamps and also to run the bell-rope, which was then

used on freight as well as passenger trains, over the tops of the cars from the engine to the caboose.

Railroading in those days was hazardous work. Because of the poor equipment and road-bed, accidents were numerous, and only the rough and careless would accept positions on the railroad. Men timid or careful would not risk their lives in such dangerous work. Recalling the hard life of railroad men in those days, I wonder that men were found who would engage in such a dangerous occupation.

All roads were single track, with very few turnouts. There was no telegraph and no air brake; the only brake known was the "arm strong" brake, which meant the exercise of plenty of muscle. The rails were very small and flat, and, being laid lengthwise on the ties, it was not an unusual thing for the end of a rail to become loose and coiling up, snake like, to poke its end through the floor of the car. The frogs, or crossing points, were very imperfect, with the result that car axles were continually breaking, and consequently wrecks were very frequent. There was no wrecking car, so that when a wreck occurred it was a case of clearing it up the best way possible.

The engines carried only one hundred pounds pressure of steam. There was no steam gauge by which to indicate the number of pounds pressure; but in its stead, a spring balance or scale, and by lifting up this, the pressure would be as-

certained by the amount of resistance of the spring. There were a variety of valve motions in those days, that known as the "spectacle hood motion" being considered the best. There were no lubricators with which to oil the valves. It was necessary for the firemen to go out on and around the front end of the engine, to tallow the valves, and on this account they were dubbed "tallow pots." This had to be done in cold, as well as in warm, weather, and many a poor fellow lost his life by falling from or being jarred off the engine while engaged in this dangerous work.

All engines burned wood. Coal as fuel up to this time had either not been thought of, or was not considered practical. Wood made a hot fire and, as a result, the engines made steam quickly; but it was a difficult task to keep the ever hungry fire gratified, and into its yawning mouth, the fire-box door, it was necessary to keep throwing constantly immense quantities of wood.

The train crew consisted of an engineer, fireman, wood passer, conductor, three brakemen and an oiler. Engineers received sixty dollars a month; conductors fifty-five, while firemen, brakemen, wood passers and oilmen received from twenty-five to thirty dollars a month, or about half the amount corresponding positions pay at the present time. The hours were long and there was work enough to keep the entire crew busy from the time we started until we got through. There was no allowance for overtime.

A brakeman's position did not then consist in wearing a neat uniform, calling out stations, helping ladies in and out of the cars when the train stopped and sitting on a plush-upholstered spring seat between stations. The duties of a passenger brakeman included cleaning out the cars and, in winter, making the fires before the train started; loading up the tender with wood—perhaps three or four times on a trip—and handling two brakes as the engineer called for them at every stop along the road. How often I have seen the engine back up to the wood-pile and heard the whistle call—"toot, toot, toot, toot,"—for wood; then the brakemen would climb on the wood-pile and—in winter digging down into the snow with their hands,—throw on a high tender from four to eight cords of wood. This was done three or four times on the run from Port Jervis to Susquehanna, a distance of one hundred and four miles.

On freight and cattle trains the life of a brakeman was still harder. On a cattle train if a man wanted to set more than two brakes, he was obliged to walk on the backs of the cattle, in order to get from one end of the car to the other. Brakemen were not allowed to ride in the caboose, and in the terrific storms of those days—worse than those we now have—men were often saved from freezing to death by lying on the warm backs of the cattle.

Brakemen usually rode on the end platforms

of freight and cattle cars and, on this account, accidents resulting in personal injury were frequent. There were no hospitals on the line of the road, the nearest one being at New York. I have seen many an injured man put upon the cars to be taken to the hospital, who died before he reached New York.

I remember one poor brakeman whose legs were run over in the railroad yard at Port Jervis. He was taken to the Delaware House and laid upon the barroom floor. On the doctor's arrival, seeing that amputation was necessary, he sent one of the men to a butcher shop to get a meat saw. After filling the poor fellow with brandy, he proceeded to cut off his legs as though he were a dog.

The railroad man of that time was an independent sort of fellow. If discharged by one road he could get a job on another; for railroad men were scarce and railroads were being built rapidly, especially in the west. It made little difference as to a man's character, he could always get a job. Many railroad men became wandering tramps, continually leaving one road to go to another.

At that time railroad men in general were a wild and reckless class. Their leisure time was usually spent in dissipation, drinking and gambling. Their environment naturally fostered such conditions. Away from the restraints of home, and compelled to live in the poor class of

hotels located near the railroad terminals, it was not surprising that their lives were of a low moral standard.

A visit to Smith's saloon, at Port Jervis, would reveal the presence there of first and second-class conductors, engineers, firemen, brakemen—and even the little bell-boys—playing cards and dominoes for drinks. The saloon was the railroad man's club. The church took no interest in, nor showed any sympathy for, railroad men; there were no Young Men's Christian Association rooms and railroad men might truthfully say: "No man careth for my soul."

Such were the conditions of railroad life into which I was initiated when I became a member of the railroad fraternity at Port Jervis, and it just suited me; my nature seemed to crave it and I entered into it with all my heart. The man who could not sing, dance, drink, fight and gamble, did not amount to much in the estimation of his fellows. While the engines carried one hundred pounds pressure, the railroad men carried still higher pressure; which was manifest in the boisterous conduct constantly in evidence.

I don't remember how long I held the position of oiler, but I gave it up to go firing for Liv Vanderwort, on engine number fifty, on a gravel train. I had been with Liv several months when on reaching Deposit one evening, Liv said:

"Tom, take her down to the roundhouse."

I started to do so, but the switchman would

not throw the switch to let me in. Running the engine back to the station, I told Liv. He got on the engine to go down with me, but remained on the fireman's side, while I ran the engine. When we approached the switch, Liv shouted at the switchman and at the same time threw a piece of cord-wood from the tender at him.

When I showed up for work the next morning, I was told to report at the office and on arriving there was informed that I was discharged for throwing a stick of wood at the switchman. "That's all right," I thought, "when Liv comes down he will explain the matter and I will get back again."

When Liv came around I told him what had happened, and asked him to see the master mechanic and explain that it was not I, but himself, who threw the wood. After a few moments' reflection, Liv said:

"Well, Tom, if I do that I'll get discharged, and you can stand being out of a job better than I can. With a wife and six children to care for it will be hard for me to lose my place, while you have no one depending on you. We had better let it stand as it is."

In the few months I had been firing for Liv I had become very much attached to him,—later I loaned him my watch and some money, which he had never returned,—and consequently I would not like to see him lose his position; so I told

him that I was satisfied to let the matter stand and that I would look for work elsewhere.

It was while firing for Liv that I saw my father for the last time. He came to Port Jervis, and had in his possession a leather wallet containing some papers which, he said, belonged to me. Fearing that he might lose them or have them stolen from him, he urged me to take them. This I refused to do, insisting that he keep them. These papers represented my title to thirty-five acres of land near the Ogden mine. This property belonged to my mother's only brother, who was a miner and a bachelor. Upon his death, being the only next of kin surviving, I became heir to it. Had I accepted the papers, it might have saved my father from meeting a tragic death; as it is generally believed among the miners at Ogden to this day that my father was murdered on their account.

Leaving Port Jervis, I went to Jersey City, and secured a position as brakeman on the Eastern Division of the Erie, where I remained for some time. One night, in company with four other men on our train, I went to New York to see the sights. Failing to get back in time in the morning to go out on our train, we were all discharged. We had lots of fun but lost our jobs.

The loss of my position on the Erie, led me to seek employment elsewhere, and in company with a man named George Hedding, who had also been discharged from the Erie, I went to

Newark, New Jersey, where we had learned there was good prospect of securing work on the Morris and Essex Railroad, a road of which up to that time I had not heard.

On applying at the office of the superintendent we were informed that he needed no brakemen, but there was a vacancy to be filled as wood passer on one of the engines and I accepted the position, becoming wood passer on the engine Delaware, with Ezekiel Crane as engineer. A few months later I was promoted to fireman on a freight train. Thus I became connected with the railroad where I have been employed almost continuously for fifty years.

What is now the great Lackawanna system was, in 1854, nothing but a few short disconnected lines of railroad, here and there between New York and Buffalo. When I began work at Newark, then the eastern terminal of the Morris and Essex Railroad, which afterwards became the most important division of the Lackawanna system, the road was not yet open to Hackettstown, forty-nine miles distant.

To celebrate its completion to Hackettstown in the fall of 1854, the new station and freight house were profusely decorated and a special train brought the stockholders and directors of the company to participate in the notable event. A collation was served in the freight house. This included, in addition to the best of eatables, an abundance of wine, of which stockholders,

directors and employees partook very freely. With the others, I had my share—and a little more—for when the freight train on which I was firing pulled out of Hackettstown that afternoon, I was tucked away in the caboose to sleep off the effect of the champagne I had too freely imbibed; while the brakeman on the train performed my duties as fireman. Railroad men have always been so loyal to one another, that even to this day they often risk their own positions to protect one of their fellows under circumstances like the foregoing. At that time it was no unusual thing to see railroad men in such a state of intoxication as to endanger their own lives and the lives of passengers, by their incapacity to rightly perform their duties.

I have known engineers to be so intoxicated, and regret to say have been so myself, that it was necessary to help them on their engines. When seated on the box in the cab, they were obliged to steady themselves by holding on to the reverse lever with one hand and the throttle handle with the other, and in this condition start out with a train. Conductors and trainmen would be in the same condition, so that in passing through the train they would support themselves by holding on to the backs of the seats. I have seen switchmen so drunk that in throwing the switch they would fall over with it, sometimes in front of a moving engine, and in this way many a poor fellow lost his life.

But as it was the general manner of life of railroad men in those days, and indeed for twenty years later, no one gave any serious thought to the matter.

After firing on freight for a couple of years, I became fireman for engineer William Osborn on a passenger train that doubled the road out of Hackettstown, leaving there in the morning and returning at night. In this way I came to live at Hackettstown, which for many years afterwards was my home.

The people of Hackettstown were rather shy of railroad men, so that the latter were not admitted to the polite society of the town.

Nor can this be wondered at. In addition to the railroad the Morris canal ran through the town, and between the railroaders and canalmen the place was kept in constant uproar. Soon after I went there, I remember going out one evening to Doodletown, now called North Hackettstown, where a lot of young people were coasting. It was a lovely moonlight night, and I noticed that the young folk did not care to have me among them, for no other reason than that I was from the railroad. However, I edged my way in until I picked up an acquaintance with one of the girls, and after riding down hill several times, I finally accompanied her home.

We stood at the gate talking for a while, and when she went in the folk teased her about the

young man with whom she had been coasting on the hill, and wanted to know his name.

At first she said that she did not know, but finally admitted it was "Tommy—Tommy—Tommy Tin-Pan"—she could not think of Keenan—and the railroad boys hearing of it, I was dubbed "Tommy Tin-Pan" for years afterwards.

At Hackettstown most of the railroad men boarded at Kip Falkanow's tavern, now known as the American House. Tip Doty was wood passer on our train, and he and I becoming tired of the life at the tavern, decided to spruce up a little and see if we could secure board with some private family. Hearing of a family who took boarders, we wended our way to the house, and as it was agreed that I act as spokesman, I knocked on the door, Tip standing behind. As the door opened, Mrs. F., the boarding-house mistress, stood in the doorway and inquired what we wished.

I bowed, and speaking as politely as I could, said:

"How do you do?"

A freezing look was her reply.

"Do you take boarders?" I asked.

"Yes, sir," she answered, rather stiffly.

"My friend and I would like very much to get board here, if you please."

"Where do you work?" she asked.

"On the railroad," I answered, and with that bang went the door in our faces.

Turning to Tip I said : " That settles it ; " and it did as far as she was concerned. There was nothing for us to do but return to the tavern.

I have known members of the church in Hackettstown to cross the street rather than meet railroad men, and I have often thought if they had stopped and spoken kindly to us and expressed some sympathy and interest in us, how many lives might have been diverted into better paths. A railroad man was almost deprived the opportunity of doing good, if he wanted to, by the social conditions then existing.

The first influence for good that came into my life was when I went to board at the home of Mrs. Woodruff, in Hackettstown. Mrs. Woodruff was the first to open her doors to railroad men, and several of us went there to board. She had a son who became an engineer on the road and who afterwards lost his life through his engine running into the Hackensack draw-bridge. Another son was cashier in the bank at Hackettstown. She had a daughter named Hannah, who became a warm friend to me, as well as to all the railroad boys, and would stick up for them when others spoke discourteously of them. There is no doubt but that the interest of Mrs. Woodruff and her daughter was due to the fact that their son and brother was a railroad man. Hannah was as noble and true a soul as ever lived and her interest in and influence over me inspired in me a purpose towards right living

hitherto unfelt in my life. Knowing that I had no home, and had no bringing up, she tried to help me in every way; got me to spruce up and introduced me into good society. I wanted to do better and be noble on her account, but would slip up occasionally when out with the boys, only to be ashamed of myself in my better moments. If she is still alive, and I think she is, "God bless her," I hope she may see these lines, as I have always cherished the memory of her kindness and goodness to me. She and her mother have been multiplied a thousandfold since that day; for hundreds of good women like them have become as a sister or a mother to many a poor railroad man, who, like myself, was without home or friends.

It was at a party to which I had been invited, through Hannah's interest in me, that I, for the first time met Mira Baldwin, who afterwards became my wife and has been the companion and sharer in my joys and sorrows for the past forty-five years.

III

A WEDDING AND A TRAGEDY

I Become an Engineer—Courting Under Difficulties—
First Religious Impressions—Married—An Unexpected Bath—My Father's Tragedy.

I HAD been firing for Engineer Osborn but a few months when I was promoted to engineer. For a time I "lay extra," which meant that I filled the place of men who were sick or had laid off for any special purpose. This took me away from Hackettstown a good deal, so that I did not see as much of Mira as I wished. For me it had its advantages, so far as my chances of securing Mira's hand and heart were concerned. Had I been in Hackettstown more, she might have learned of the dissipation in which I indulged at times when out with the boys; which I fear would have abruptly ended our courtship. Like so many young men, who hide their real character from the girl whose love they seek to cultivate, the weaknesses of my nature were hid from Mira, as I was careful that she should only see me when I looked my best and was on my good behaviour.

Mira was one of four daughters of William Baldwin, each of whom married railroad men.

Our courtship had its own peculiar difficulties, in this sense being no exception to the rule. The particular difficulty we experienced was due to the fact that each of the four daughters had beaux at the same time, who called more or less regularly. There was but one room, the parlour, in which to entertain. This, to say the least, even among lovers, was a little embarrassing.

The parlour contained one sofa which was usually occupied by the first one who called, and whose right to its possession was not questioned during the evening. The other couples were obliged to occupy rocking-chairs, and to relieve the embarrassment as much as possible the backs of the chairs were turned towards each other.

William Baldwin was a poor man, but he was straightforward and honest. His wife and he were members of the Methodist church. Mrs. Baldwin was a shouter, for in those days the men and women shouted the praise of God with no uncertain sound. Mrs. Baldwin did not shout any louder than she lived, however. She was a godly woman and in later years loved me as if I were her own son. How often she used to plead with me to turn from sin and live a better life!

I remember visiting the Methodist church soon after meeting Mira, not to hear the preaching so much as to see her, as I knew she would be there. This church was called the "eel pot" because of the lively character of the meetings.

The women sat on one side of the building and the men on the other. The preaching was very plain and to the point. When a revival was going on, and the invitation was given, it was not to put up your hand or sign a card, but "come and get on your knees, you hell-deserving sinner and be saved," while the brethren and sisters would go up and down the aisle shouting and praying.

It was while courting Mira that I received my first religious impressions. They came to me under rather peculiar circumstances.

Mira's uncle, John Baldwin, an earnest consecrated man of God and a shouter, lived next door to her father. He used to enjoy going out on his stoop to sing and pray, and frequently as I called to see Mira I saw and heard him.

As I heard him singing and praying, I thought I would like to be just such a man as John Baldwin. The freedom and joy that he manifested just suited me and I concluded that, if I ever got religion, I wanted the kind of religion John Baldwin had.

One hymn which he often sang made a deep impression upon me and, sinking into my heart, followed me all through a life of sin. It contained such a vivid picture of the gospel story that if I had been called to die I could not say that I had never heard of Jesus.

There were eight verses to this hymn and, from hearing John Baldwin sing it, I learned

them by heart, and often in the midst of my unhappy life they would come to me and condemn me.

The hymn was used extensively in revival meetings in those days, though I never hear it now.

Every line of it is clear in my memory, as though it was only yesterday I heard the dear old man sing it.

The first, second and third verses contain a picture of the dying Saviour on Calvary; in the fourth and fifth verses is given the story of His rejection by the Jews and His interment by Joseph.

The sixth verse, which speaks of the Saviour as bursting the bands of death and being triumphant over the grave, led the old man to lie back in his chair with his face beaming and turned towards heaven, and as he clapped his hands he would shout: "Glory to God." It used to thrill me through and through and I would sit listening and weeping.

The seventh verse speaks of the interceding Saviour, and the eighth gives the Father's answer of peace and pardon,—the whole hymn being a picture of the love of God in the atonement made on Calvary for the sins of the world. I often find myself singing it now. The hymn, as dear old Uncle John Baldwin sang it, is here given.

A Wedding and a Tragedy 45

Saw ye my Saviour? Saw ye my Saviour?
Saw ye my Saviour and God?
Oh! He died on Calvary, to atone for you and me,
And to purchase our pardon with blood.

He was extended! He was extended!
Shamefully nailed to the cross;
Oh! He bowed His head and died; thus my Lord was
crucified,
To atone for a world that was lost.

Jesus hung bleeding! Jesus hung bleeding!
Three dreadful hours in pain;
Oh! the sun refused to shine, when His Majesty divine
Was derided, insulted and slain.

Darkness prevailed! Darkness prevailed!
Darkness prevailed o'er the land;
Oh! the solid rocks were rent through creation's vast extent
When the Jews crucified the God-man.

When it was finished, when it was finished,
And the atonement was made;
He was taken by the great and embalmed in spices sweet,
And in a new sepulchre laid.

Hail mighty Saviour! Hail mighty Saviour!
Prince and the author of peace;
Oh! He burst the bands of death and triumphant through the
east
He ascended to mansions of bliss.

Now interceding! Now interceding!
Pleading that sinners may live;
Crying, "Father, I have died! Oh! behold My hands and
side,
To redeem them; I pray Thee forgive."
"I will forgive them; I will forgive them,
If they'll repent and believe;
Let them now return to Me, and be reconciled to Thee,
And salvation they shall receive."

I was now assigned to a run on the Sussex road, a branch of the Morris and Essex. This took me away from Hackettstown, and from Mira, whom I could see only on rare occasions.

Being on a steady run and earning good wages, I was more than ever impressed with the fact that it is not good for man to be alone. Mira and I had been engaged for some time, and I concluded that the present conditions were sufficient to warrant our being married. At the first opportunity, I took occasion to broach the subject. She, to my great joy, was willing, and we were quietly married on November 25, 1858.

When I claimed Mira as my bride, I considered that I had laid siege to and captured the heart of the purest and best girl in the world; and I am of the same opinion still. My cup of happiness was complete. It was not her fault that it did not always remain so. She was ever the kind, forbearing, forgiving, devoted one.

The first year of our married life was one of happiness to each of us. I enjoyed being home with Mira, and, having learned to play the banjo, we would while away the happy hours together.

Within a year after our marriage, I was assigned to a run on the main line and we returned to Hackettstown to live.

I had always been considered good company, and having become proficient in playing the banjo, my presence at parties was frequently in demand. In those days, the use of wine or

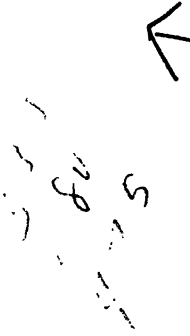
whiskey was as common on such occasions as tea or coffee is now, and some of my friends knowing my aptitude to indulge in strong drink, encouraged rather than restrained me. On one such occasion, I was quietly informed that a bottle for my especial convenience was placed on a shelf under the stairs and, needless to say, I found it necessary to be excused several times during the evening in order to sample its contents. This manifested itself in my hilarious condition as the evening progressed.

On the way home, in crossing the bridge over the canal, I met some friends and asked them if they would like a tune on the banjo. They expressed themselves in the affirmative, but circumstances developed which prevented them from hearing it at that time.

On either side of the bridge was a guard-rail, which usually had two beams running lengthwise; but at this time the upper one was missing. To play the banjo it was necessary for me to be in a sitting position, so I went to the guard-rail intending to sit on the lower beam and rest my back against the upper one. In the darkness I did not see that the latter was missing, so that instead of resting my back on it, I went backwards, heels over head, banjo and all, and breaking through the ice in the canal, received an icy bath. I held on to the banjo, however, and my friends, running around the end of the bridge and on to the bank, pulled me out. I hastened home

hatless, the icy water dripping from my arms and clothes.

When Mira opened the door and I stepped into the hall, I presented a sorry looking appearance. Always ready to make the best of any situation, she did not scold, dear good soul, but hurried me to bed, fearing I might catch cold from my unexpected bath.



It was not because I loved to drink that I indulged in its use so frequently; it was rather due to the entreaties and persuasions of my associates, who enjoyed my company to the extent that they frequently sent one of their number to my home with an invitation to come and join them. I loved my home, and hundreds of times would have remained there with my wife and the two children, Eugene and Maggie, with whom the Lord had blessed us, were it not that I was enticed away in this manner. It seemed as though I could not refuse to go with them, notwithstanding Mira's affectionate entreaties to remain at home; but go I would. Like many another man, my associates were my undoing.

One instance I recall, when Mira in her desire to have me stay at home accompanied me to the door of a saloon, begging me to remain with her. In her despair she laid hold of my coat in an endeavour to hold me back as I was about to enter the saloon. She held on with such a grip that the seam in my coat ripped up the back, but in

I went; while she returned home to weep and wait anxiously for my return.

Little did I think I was sowing that which I would reap in tears and sorrow, later, for I have learned that, "*whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*"

About this time I learned indirectly that one year previous my father had died, and was buried in the Presbyterian burying-ground, at Sparta, New Jersey. As soon as possible I went to Sparta to see my father's grave, and found it fallen in and uncared for. As I stood looking at it, I reflected on the sad circumstances of his life. He had been a slave to strong drink, and this to a great extent had been the cause of his filling an untimely grave. In this connection I thought of my own life, that I also was a drinking man, and I saw no better prospect for myself than that I too would eventually fill a drunkard's grave. Overwhelmed with the thought of such an ultimate end, I burst into tears, giving vent to my grief for my father as well as for myself.

Hunting up the caretaker of the burying-ground, from whom I borrowed a spade, I dug some sod, on which, as I fixed up the grave, my tears fell generously.

For several years I knew nothing of the tragic circumstances that attended my father's death, until upon visiting my childhood scenes, some time afterwards, I decided to walk over to Ogden

and endeavour to locate the property to which I had become heir by my uncle's death.

Thinking that there might be an opportunity of shooting some quail or partridge going over the mountain, I borrowed a dog and gun from a friend. This was providential, for, had I not had the gun, ere I returned I might have met my father's fate.

On reaching Ogden I stopped to speak to a man digging potatoes in a field. As we engaged in conversation I asked him to whom the property on which he was digging belonged, and to my surprise, he replied:—

"This is what is known as the Keenan property. It is supposed to belong to Tom Keenan, a son of Jack Keenan, who was killed over near Sparta some years ago. Jack Keenan was murdered by a man named G—— who has papers by which he claims to own this property. Nobody seems to know what has become of Tom Keenan."

"I am Tom Keenan," I said.

"What! are you Jack Keenan's son?" he asked in amazement. He then went on to tell me how that my father's body was found with the neck broken, at the foot of the stairs in a country hotel. While it was thought at the time that in an intoxicated condition he had fallen down-stairs and broken his neck, the impression prevailed later, from statements made by G—— while under the influence of drink, that he mur-

dered my father to get possession of the papers to the property which he boasted of having, but which were never recorded.

Learning that G—— was then employed in the mine near by, I went to its mouth and asked for him. When he made his appearance, I saw that he was a wicked-looking individual, and, making myself known to him, I demanded the papers belonging to me which I understood he had in his possession. He denied all knowledge or possession of the papers. I accused him of being responsible for my father's death, but told him if he would hand over the papers I would make him no further trouble. He was too wise to be caught in any such trap and continued to maintain that he knew nothing about the papers. So I left him.

The road back to Franklin was a circuitous one, and, as I came to a lonely spot, I was suddenly confronted by G—— stepping out of the bushes not twenty feet away. In an instant I had my gun in readiness to bear upon him, as I said :—

“See here, G——, what are you doing here?”

“I'm looking for my cow,” was his ready answer, as he turned and disappeared again in the bushes.

The moment he appeared, I believed, and am still convinced, that he intended to murder me as he had my father. Had I not been armed, he might have accomplished his purpose.

Later, I caused his arrest and secured his indictment for the murder of my father, but through lack of evidence, he escaped the just penalty of his misdeeds, so far as human law is concerned.

IV

A BANTER AND ITS RESULTS

Off for California—Crossing the Isthmus—Railroading on the Sierras—Home Again.

THE unusual demand for railroad men throughout the west in 1868—due to the fact that some of the great railroads which now stretch across the continent were then being built—led many men in the east to become affected with what was called the “western fever,” and leaving their positions to start for the western country.

There were no transcontinental lines to the Pacific coast at that time, the first through line being completed one year later, in 1869; consequently, California could be reached only by steamer to the Isthmus of Panama, crossing the Isthmus by rail and continuing by steamer up the Pacific coast; or by the slower route, sailing around Cape Horn. There were also caravan routes across the country, but this mode of travel was more tedious and expensive than either of the others.

One day in the fall of 1868, Fred Heizman, at that time engineer on the Hackettstown mail, came to me and said: “Tom, I’m going to California. Will you go with me?”

"Yes, if you go," I answered.

In a few days I was approached by another engineer, Dewitt Marean, who said: "Tom, are you going to California?"

"Yes, if Fred Heizman goes," I replied.

I rather looked upon it as a joke, and said nothing at home about my prospective departure.

Pretty soon it was noised about the round-house that Fred Heizman, Dewitt Marean and Tom Keenan were going to California. Several other engineers said they would go if Fred Heizman and Tom Keenan went.

When pay-day came, a number of us went over to the Sinclair House, where the railroad men usually got together, and after having several drinks, Fred Heizman said: "If you fellows are going to California, come on," and together we crossed the ferry to New York.

In a ticket office at the foot of Canal Street, we bought our tickets for California. Fred Heizman stepped up first and paid \$55.00 for a second cabin ticket to San Francisco; next came Tom Keenan, then Dewitt Marean, Billy Sair, Sim Fuller, George Cook and Charley Peck, all of us engineers on the Morris and Essex road. The steamer, named the *Dakota*, was to sail next day for the Isthmus.

When I reached home at Hackettstown, I said: "Wife, I'm going to California."

"When?" she asked.

"To-morrow," I replied, indifferently.

She only laughed, thinking I was joking. I did not care to say much about it, as I knew there would be a scene if she really thought I was going. Soon afterwards her sister came in and told her that I had my ticket.

Mira came to me and pleadingly said: "Are you really going to California and leave the children and me here?"

"Yes, if Fred Heizman goes," I answered.

What a night we put in! There was no sleep for any one in the house. In the morning I packed up what little I had, and that was not much, and took my departure. I kissed the children good-bye and then kissed my wife who thought, because of my drinking life, she would never see me again. I could hear her shrieks all the way to the station. At Dover, I stopped off and bought a pair of boots, taking the next train to Hoboken, where the boys were waiting for me on the platform. After a last visit to the Sinclair House where we "set 'em up" all 'round, we crossed to New York and got on board the *Dakota*. Just before the gangplank was swung over the side, Fred Heizman decided not to go and sold his ticket to Jack Armstrong, another engineer. It was Fred who had induced us all to give up our positions, and to have him leave us now made us feel pretty badly. However, having bought our tickets, we decided to go on; and so remained on board. A number of the railroad boys had gathered on the dock and gave

us a hearty send-off. As we pushed off into the river I could hear Fred's voice shouting: "Good-bye, Keenan! Good-bye, Keenan!"

After seeing us off, Fred returned to Hoboken expecting to get his old run on the Hackettstown mail, but the superintendent, Colonel Bethuen, was so incensed against him, he having cost the road seven good engineers, he would give him nothing to run but a coal train out of Philipsburg. This Fred would not accept. He then went over to Long Island, securing a position as engineer on the Long Island Railroad, where he remained the rest of his life.

It was a jolly crowd, if not a very presentable one, that boarded the *Dakota* that day. We had all been imbibing pretty freely; had we been sober we would all probably have backed out with Fred Heizman.

Travelling second-class, we had fairly good accommodations. Next morning I went to get a drink at the water barrel, but as they had put lime in the water, as is generally done on board ship, it only made me feel sicker than I already was, and I began to think what a fool I had been to leave my home and family on account of a banter. I would have given anything to be back; but it was too late. I was not on a train from which I could drop off and go back at the next station; but on a ship where dropping off meant landing nowhere.

The next day was clear and bright. Suddenly

we were startled by the blowing of the steamer's whistle and cries of "Fire! Fire!" The women began to scream and everything was in confusion. I looked around to see if I could find a life preserver, but could see none. I looked over the side and wished I had never started. I thought of my sinful life and knew I was not prepared to die. By this time it was noised about that it was a false alarm, for the purpose of practice; so I breathed a sigh of relief. In a few days another alarm of fire was given, but this did not affect us nearly as much as the first.

The next day the engines broke down, and, the sails being set instead, we made slow progress. The engines had been equipped with the new Dickerson valve motion, this being the first trip on which it was used. The chief engineer invited the locomotive engineers to go below and help him in adjusting the machinery. In a little while one of our men, Charley Peck, located the difficulty and we were able to proceed again under steam, reaching Aspinwall in nine days from New York.

From Aspinwall we crossed the Isthmus on the railroad, which, with the exception of the engineers, was operated entirely by negroes.

There were no docks at Panama, so that it was necessary to transfer the passengers and baggage by means of lighters to the steamer which would take us up the Pacific coast. This was extremely slow work and allowed us the opportunity of

patronizing the saloons of Panama, as a result of which I got into trouble.

With us when we came off on the lighter was a passenger named O'Brien, who had been gambling all night. Finding that his family was not on the steamer, he wanted to go ashore and get them; but the officers of the steamer would not let him go. I had been drinking enough to be "bossy," so I said to O'Brien: "Get on the lighter and go and get your family."

The first officer stepped up to me with his hands in his hip pockets and pulling out two revolvers pointed them right in my face and said: "I am an officer of this ship and am looking for just such New York toughs as you are."

While the officer, who was drunker than I, said this, I saw one of our engineers, George Cook, standing behind him with a knife in his left hand, raised ready to stab the officer if he did anything to me. In an instant I was sobered and, fearing George would stab the officer, I deliberately turned my back towards him, saying: "There is no use of your pulling out those guns."

The officer did not know that George stood behind him, so when I turned around again I saw that George's hand was down and so were the guns. Replacing the latter in his pockets, the officer took out a pair of handcuffs and had put one of them on me when George said: "Tom, don't let him put those on you. I'll take care of you until the boys come."

We were now on the steamer *Nebraska*, and the prospects of my being in irons across the Pacific was not a pleasant one. When George said this, my courage began to return, and I would not let the officer put on the other handcuff. The officer then said: "You come with me," as he held the other handcuff in his hand.

I refused, when George said: "Go on, Tom, I'll go with you."

He led me along a passageway, I expected to the calaboose, or ship's prison; but no, it was to his own stateroom, George following. When we got there he asked us to be seated, and stooping down, he pulled from under the berth a demijohn of brandy. Pouring out a tumbler full and holding it out to me, he said: "When I meet as brave a man as you are, I want to treat him."

"No, no," I said, "you drink first." I was afraid there might be knock-out drops in it. He emptied the glass down his own throat; then poured one for me, which I drank—and it tasted good—and then poured a glass for George. He then took a key and unlocked the handcuff on my wrist, saying: "Gentlemen, you are my style of men." We found him a first-rate fellow and a warm friend to all the railroad boys on the trip across the Pacific.

We stopped at Manzanillo, Mexico, for coal, which was brought on board by "greasers," a very small type of native Mexican. While lying in the harbour, I noticed something coming from

the shore towards the steamer. It proved to be a long canoe with a Mexican sitting in the stern; and in the water, one on each side of the canoe, was a pair of Mexican cattle swimming, the Mexican steering them towards the steamer. When they came along side, a block and tackle were dropped from the upper deck and, a ship's rope being made fast around the horns of the cattle, they were hoisted on board suspended by the horns.

In the water swimming around the ship were native boys who, looking up at the passengers, would say: "Dime, dime." If a dime was dropped overboard forward on the ship, they would swim from the stern to where the dime was dropped and, diving, would get it before it reached bottom.

One death occurred on board during the trip. The body was brought on deck covered with an American flag. A brief funeral service was conducted, during which the body was slipped over the side and committed to the deep; the flag being pulled off as the body went overboard. Nothing, however, stopped the gambling which continued day and night until we arrived at San Francisco.

When we reached San Francisco, O'Brien made charges against the owners of the *Nebraska* for failing to bring his family. The owners of the opposition line of steamers took up the case for him and pushed it. They succeeded eventu-

ally in driving the line, to which the *Nebraska* belonged, out of business.

On our arrival, we went to the "What Cheer House," to get something to drink. While standing at the bar, three members of the Vigilance Committee came in and stepping up to one of those standing there, said: "We will give you six hours to leave this city." He was an old gambler and noted desperado.

There being no railroad from San Francisco to Sacramento we went by steamer up the American River. The band on the steamer played nearly all night. It seemed as though every one on board was gambling. Oh, what a sight! I thought I had seen a good deal of this kind of life, but I began to see more and more. I could not gamble, but I could drink; yet I could see that it would not do for me to get intoxicated; for when in this condition I wanted to fight, and these fellows did not fight as they did in "Jersey." They carried guns, laid them on the table when gambling and when there was any trouble they would shoot. So I was careful to keep sober, and I made up my mind that, as far as I was concerned, it was a case of mind my own business and look out for Tom Keenan.

When we reached Sacramento, we all found work on a railroad running over the Sierra Nevada Mountains. I was taken sick in the Western Hotel at Sacramento, while the rest of the boys went over the mountain to learn the

road. The attendants at the hotel were all Chinamen and I had great difficulty in trying to explain to the one who waited on me what I wanted. I would ask for whiskey and he would bring me water, and when I wanted water he brought me whiskey.

While lying in my room sick, a knock came to the door and I called out: "Come in."

A well-dressed gentleman entered. I thought he was a doctor the boys had sent to see me; but in this I was mistaken.

He took a seat by my bed and said: "Are you one of the locomotive engineers from the States?"

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"Your name is Keenan?"

"Yes, sir."

"There are several of you; are there not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where are the others?"

"Gone over the mountain."

He pulled a paper from his pocket, saying: "You are the one I want to see."

"Well," I thought, "what's coming now?"

"Did you come over on the *Dakota* to Aspinwall?"

"Yes, sir."

"You are the man the pistols were pointed at on board the *Nebraska*?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you please give me your statement and an affidavit of the affair?"

"No, sir, I will not."

"Why?" he asked.

"I am in a strange country and do not want to get into any trouble," I said. "The mate of the ship was a first-rate fellow, and as far as I am concerned it is all forgotten and gone."

He said: "You will have to tell what you know." He went out and I never heard from it again.

In a few days I reported for work. There was no engine house and no shops. Engines were built in the east, boxed up and shipped around Cape Horn. I was put in charge of the work of putting the engines together and getting them in working order. For this work I was given a gang of men with blocks and falls, etc. After putting two engines together and doing good work on them, I was then sent to Rocklin where I found that Dewitt Marean, George Cook, Jack Armstrong, Billy Sair, Sim Fuller and Charley Peck were all at work, running engines. A bad spirit had developed towards us when the hoosiers found out we were Brotherhood men.

I had orders to go out with engineer Bayley to learn the road, but neither the engineer nor fireman would let me sit in the cab, compelling me to stand all the time I was on the engine. The engine foreman, who loved rum pretty well, was in with the hoosiers, but it was not long before

he was discharged and engineer Cooley was put in his place. The latter was a member of the Brotherhood, so that things took a change for the better under him. Cooley had come off the Hudson River road and as he thought well of me, gave me a good engine. I did not expect to stay long in that country. I was homesick. From the time I got there until I left, I was a most unhappy man. I felt that I did not leave home right. I could hear the parting cry of my wife and it made me long to be back; and in every letter I received from her she would plead with me to come home. Whenever I received a letter from her, I dared not read it before anybody, as I knew I would blubber over it; so I would go out in the chaparral bushes all alone, read it, have a good cry, brace up by taking a good drink of whiskey and then go on again. Oh, how homesick I was!

At Rocklin I boarded in a shanty where there was a bar. The place was run by Dutch John. I never knew his right name, but that was the name he went by. Dutch John wanted to go to Sacramento on some business and, it being my day in, he asked me to tend bar while he was gone; which I did.

The first customer to come in was an old buck Digger Indian. He laid down his "two bittee" on the bar and I shoved out the whiskey bottle to him. He poured a tumbler full, drank it and went out. In a short time he came in again,

put down his "two bíttee," and again I gave him the bottle. I began to think I was doing good business.

After a while the storekeeper came running in, and asked:

"Where is Dutch John?"

"Gone to Sacramento," I said.

"Who's tending bar?"

"I am."

"Did you sell whiskey to a buck Indian?"

"Yes," I said.

"Didn't you know it was against the law to sell whiskey to Indians?"

"No, I didn't."

"Well, Dutch John will lose his license, if we don't do something quick; so come with me."

Following him out we found my customer crazy drunk and threatening to kill everybody. We got a rope and taking the Indian behind the shanties in the chaparral bushes, we knocked him down, bound him with the rope and laid him in one of the sheds. It was the first time I had seen an Indian drunk, and he was worse than anybody I had ever seen in that condition.

The Central Pacific, now the Southern Pacific, at this time was only open as far as Winnamucka, from Sacramento. To Rocklin it was eighteen miles of level track, Rocklin being the starting point of the Mountain Division. The grade over the mountain was eighteen feet to the mile, and to the top of the mountain it was eighty

miles. No one can describe the scenery in that country ; a ride over the road is necessary to get an idea of its beauty.

There was but one passenger train daily each way between Sacramento and Winnamucka. From Rocklin to Truckee, the freights were run in sections on account of the grade, six to eight cars constituting a train. The regular freight train would carry a large caboose in which there were no seats. In this caboose the passengers would sit down or lie down on their blankets, as blankets were generally carried by travellers in those days.

The road ran through the principal gold mining region : Placerville, Gold Run and Emigrant Gap. On the south side of the mountain after we left Colfax and got around Cape Horn—a point on the mountain—we ran under snow-sheds, which were then building, until we got part way down on the other side towards Donner Lake. The snow would at times be from forty to sixty feet deep, and these snow-sheds were built over the tracks on the mountainside to keep the snow from piling on the track and blocking the road.

Truckee had just opened up with restaurants, gambling and dancing shanties, and everything the devil could produce. There were Indians, Chinamen, Spanish women, and natives of almost every clime at Truckee. It was here for the first time that I saw a woman presiding at a faro table

and smoking cigarettes. It was near here that the Donner family, emigrating to California, was snowed in. They were obliged to eat up all their cattle, and then one another, to keep from starving, only two of them coming out alive, and they were in California at this time. Truckee and Reno were the paradise of the desperado gamblers while I was there. At every station there were faro tables, and whiskey—no beer—was sold in abundance. Goat meat was sold in the restaurants for lamb or mutton, there being no sheep in that country. Sometimes you would get a piece of old buck and you could smell it all day. Sunday was a day of general carousing, theatres open, gambling, drinking and everything else in full blast. Considerable robbery was being committed. Desperadoes with masks over their faces would point a revolver in a man's face, and ordering "Hands up," would go through his clothes and take everything in the shape of money; but they always left him his watch. It was nothing to see a dead man almost anywhere. I remember at Winnamucka one day Dewitt Marean stepped off his engine and went into a saloon to get a drink. When he came out he said: "They have just shot a man dead in there." There were no graveyards, no law, no order, in fact, every man was a law unto himself.

Railroading, for an engineer below Truckee, was trying work on account of the alkali in the water. There were no wells, and the system of

packing water on that Division had not yet been introduced. The engines looked as though some one had thrown pails of whitewash over them, because of the alkali. They were subjected to severe usage. Many of them were lying in the yards or side-tracks, some with boilers burned, others with a rocker arm or eccentrics broken, and others with their valves all cut to pieces, many of them being brand new engines.

At Winnamucka it was a pitiable sight to see the emigrants coming over the plains with their caravans, their cattle dying on the way because of lack of water, and men, women and children suffering from the same cause. On account of the better quality of water, snow-water—the best in the world—I remained on the mountain, but was homesick all the time.

Black smallpox had broken out at Rocklin and this led me to the conclusion that I would start for home. George Cook accompanied me as far as Sacramento. He was not feeling well, and, on his return to Rocklin next day, was taken with smallpox and removed to the hospital at Sacramento. He recovered, but his face was very much disfigured. At Sacramento I bade George good-bye and went on to San Francisco. When I reached there I found that the opposition line had been taken off, and, while I had come out second cabin for fifty-five dollars, the steerage fare to return was eighty-five dollars in gold. There was nothing to do but go steerage.

The gangplank was swung off and, as we passed through the Golden Gate, we could hear the boom of cannon. I went to my quarters, and what a contrast I found in the accommodations to those of the outward trip! I was given a bunk in which I was obliged to sleep with both my clothes and boots on. The next day as I went into the cabin to eat, I found only a swinging table at which the passengers were obliged to stand. At each person's place was a tin cup, tin plate, tin soup dish, and a knife and fork, and in the centre of the table a heap of potatoes and a pot of bean soup. This was the dinner bill of fare. I looked at the soup for a while, it had *been* soup evidently,—some one suggested that it was made of dish-water,—but I could eat nothing. I was feeling homesick, heart-sick and seasick, and I wished the old ship would go down. I ate nothing for two days. On the third day I made up my mind that I would tackle the bean soup anyway, and thus keep from starving. Grabbing a potato, I mashed it into the soup, shook on plenty of pepper and salt and began to eat. I was surprised to find how good it tasted. To this day I like potatoes mashed in soup.

There was a general apprehension on board that smallpox would break out. A young man in the steerage, whose sister was with him, was taken sick. He went to see the purser, who was also the doctor. He gave him a dose of something that must have driven the young man crazy,

for in a few hours he jumped overboard. No attempt was made to rescue him, as it was thought he had smallpox, and the ship kept right on her course.

I have travelled a good deal, but that trip in the steerage was the worst experience of my life. The smell was awful. Rats would run over us in our bunks at night and other things transpired too horrible to mention.

Coming around Cape Hatteras we ran into a severe storm, so that it was necessary to fasten down the hatches and allow none of the passengers on deck. There were a number of old Californians on board who had been gambling on the entire trip. During the storm, in which they thought they would be lost, they proved to be the biggest cowards I have ever seen.

But eventually I reached home safely, and I was indeed a happy man when I looked into the faces of my wife and children again. I reported for work to the superintendent, Samuel Shock, and he sent me to run a coal train with a big Baldwin engine, between Philipsburg and Chatham. Here I remained until Mr. Shock sent for me to come to Hoboken.

V

SEEING THE ELEPHANT

Expelled from the Brotherhood—A Fishing Trip and a Scrimmage—Arrested and Locked Up—Kind Words from a Master Mechanic and a Superintendent.

WITH the organization of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, which adopted as its motto "sobriety, truth, justice and morality," an effort was made to improve, if possible, the moral condition of its members. Up to this time, the man who could drink the deepest, swear the loudest, and fight the hardest was considered the best railroad man, regarded as a hero, and looked up to and idolized by the rest. Among the first to apply for a charter for the formation of a Division of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers were the engineers of Jersey City and Hoboken. The charter being granted they organized as Division Number 53 of Jersey City.

At the outset of the work of the Brotherhood there was an enthusiasm for the enforcement of the law—it would have been better for the Brotherhood had it continued to enforce the law as it did in the beginning—and among the first to fall a victim to its enforcement was Tom Keenan.

I always liked a dog and usually had one at my home. On learning that a man who kept a saloon on the Hackensack Meadows, where the Pennsylvania Railroad shops now stand, had a setter for sale, I went there for the purpose of seeing the dog and to buy him if he suited me. It was usual in those days to celebrate any special event by a generous indulgence in the flowing bowl, or rather bottle, and purchasing the dog was to my mind a fitting occasion for such a celebration.

When ready to start for home, I took the dog and, standing on the railroad track, waving my hat, I stopped the first train that came along, the engineer halting to prevent the train from running over me.

With my new purchase I got on board, and the train proceeded to its destination. Charges for being drunk were preferred against me by the engineer of the train, and I was notified to appear before Division 53 to answer the same.

The day came for the Division to meet and act upon my case, and I made my appearance. Jim Smith was chief engineer. Responding when my name was called, I went forward and stood before the chief engineer. The charges were then read.

The chief said: "Brother Keenan, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty," I answered, as I honestly admitted the charge.

The chief engineer then went through the sad ordeal of suspending me from membership in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. As he gave me orders to leave the Division, there was not a dry eye in the room. I left, with the tears streaming down my cheeks, and going down the steps I felt as I had never felt before in my life. I remembered that there were many men in the Division who could drink more rum than I could, yet they remained while I was expelled; but I had violated the law and must suffer the penalty.

Did I stop drinking? No! I let up a little and did not drink so freely for a time, as I was anxious to be reinstated; and in a few months I was again admitted to membership in the Brotherhood.

I recall another instance of the life we lived in those days.

One day, in company with Jim Allen and two other engineers, I went for a day's fishing to the banks off Sandy Hook. It was considered unwise to go without a bottle of whiskey—for the purpose of warding off seasickness—and during the day I partook of it more freely than the others. When we reached Newark on our return we stood upon the station platform, waiting for a train which would take the rest of the party to their homes in South Orange. As usual I was noisy, and in an altercation with Jim Allen called him a liar. In an instant Jim's right fist

landed on my face and I measured my length on the platform. Regaining my feet, I attempted to strike him, when he again hit me and knocked me down. When I got up the second time, I struck Jim, knocking him over, at which point I was grabbed from behind firmly, in what is known as a "back hold," thrown to the platform and held there, while the two engineers who had been with us held Jim, so that he and I would not again come together. The train coming in at this moment they all jumped on board and went home.

My captor and I struggled on the platform until the train had gone, when, on freeing me, I found it was Johnny Lewis, another engineer. He had been waiting for the train to take him to South Orange also, but allowed it to go and leave him, rather than that Jim and I should continue fighting. Johnny was not a drinking man, and, in this instance considering him my friend, I insisted that he go home with me, as two hours would elapse before the arrival of the next train to South Orange.

It was the first time that Johnny had been to my home, and he still remembers the interesting manner in which I entertained him. Having introduced him to my wife, I asked him to be seated. Taking off my shoes as we sat in the front room, I threw myself on the floor and, lying on my back, conversed with him on the subject of the recent scrimmage. I was very

much hurt to think that Jim had hit me, and, becoming greatly excited, got up, went out of the door in my stockings and up the street on a run, Johnny and my wife following. Once more Johnny got a "back hold" upon me and held me until Mira came up and, together, they prevailed upon me to return home. When they had quieted me, Johnny left us, just in time to catch the last train to South Orange.

At another time, when the famous horses, Ethan Allen, Flora Temple and Dexter were the pride of the trotting turf, in company with an engineer named Al Dodd, I went to see these noted horses trot. We crossed the Fulton Ferry to Brooklyn, where we took a train on the Long Island Railroad to the race-course, which was known, if I remember rightly, as the Flushing track. The transportation facilities in those days were rather crude, the cars small, and so crowded that a great many rode on the roofs, and others on the engine, in short anywhere they could hang on.

My favourite must have won, for on the way back I celebrated the victory by, unfortunately for me, imbibing too freely. When we reached New York, by way of Hunter's Point Ferry, I had some difficulty with a Jew who kept a fruit stand, got into a fight, and, before I knew it, the police had nabbed me and were hauling me off to the station-house.

As soon as I got into trouble, Al deserted me

and started for Hoboken. He is still alive and running an engine on the Lackawanna, and I often tell him that he treated me badly in leaving me as he did.

When we reached the station-house I was taken to the desk and my record entered on the blotter, as follows :

"What is your name?"

"John Clouse," I answered.

"What is your occupation?"

"Boatman."

"Where do you live?"

"Stanhope."

My watch, keys and knife were taken from me, and an officer said :

"Come with me."

I followed him down-stairs to the cells in which prisoners were locked up for the night. I was now a prisoner, a new experience for me, and already I began to be pretty well sobered.

As we went down the stairs, I said to the officer :

"I hope you will give me a clean cell. I am a locomotive engineer and not a common bum ; and I have a good friend on the police force, named Bob Quackenbush."

"Are you a friend of Bob Quackenbush?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes, I am," I said. "He was my conductor for many years on the Sussex road."

"Well," he replied, "I wish I had known that

before we got this far. I might have kept you from getting in here. It is too late now, however, but I'll see that you have a clean cell."

At this time women wore hoop skirts, and as we passed a cell in which I saw some hoop skirts hanging on the wall, I said: "You might put me in here."

He routed out the female occupant of the cell, hoops and all. As she passed us in the hall, I saw that she did not enjoy being disturbed. Being put in the cell, the door was shut with a bang. Here I was, a prisoner, in a cell, in a station-house, in the City of New York; my friend Al gone back on me and with no way of communicating with any one else. I sat down on the cot, which was to serve me as a bed, and began to ask myself: "Well, Keenan, have you come to this?"

I did not sleep much that night. I was "seeing the elephant" sure enough. Towards morning, I fell into a dose and was awakened by the turning of the lock in the door, which went back with a sharp click. I was ordered out into the corridor, and, with the other prisoners gathered in during the night, was then taken to Jefferson Market police court. Here we were put in the prisoners' pen. This was a large room with iron gratings over the windows and on the door. In this pen there must have been one hundred and fifty prisoners, the worst looking representation of humanity I have ever seen, before or since.

There were men and women of all nationalities and colours, some with black eyes, others with their faces cut or bruised, others had their heads bandaged,—a motley crowd in general.

Soon after we reached there, black bread and coffee were passed around to the prisoners, but I did not want any. The women were then separated from the men and the prisoners one by one were taken before the judge.

As I looked out of the window I saw the "black Maria," or prison van, drive up to the sidewalk in front of the court-house, and then as the prisoners received their sentence they were hustled out of the court room, pushed into the "black Maria" and driven off to the city prison on Blackwell's Island.

Some of the prisoners would step into the van willingly and others would draw back and balk, when the officers would take them bodily and throw them in like a sack of rags. I was awfully afraid that I would have to go to Blackwell's Island. I depended on Al to send some of my friends from Hoboken to get me out, but he did not do so. I made up my mind that if I had to go in the "black Maria" I would go in willingly and not make a fuss, and I was expecting every minute it would be my turn next. Three dollars, all the money I had, I had given to a fellow-prisoner to go to Hoboken to tell some of the boys to come and get me out; but while he took the money, he did not go to Hoboken, and thus

I was again disappointed in my hope of getting free.

It was the third of July, always a heavy day on railroads, and as several extra trains were necessary on our road that day, fortunately for me, I was needed very badly at Hoboken.

On inquiring about me they learned from Al that I had gotten into trouble and was arrested the day before. Billy Mains, the timekeeper, started for New York at once to find me. He visited nearly every police station in the city, but, as I had given the name of "John Clouse," could find no trace of me, but finally decided to visit the police court, where he asked for the privilege of looking at the prisoners. Every time the door opened, I expected that I would be the next one called and sent off in the "black Maria." On looking through the grating, I spied my friend Billy and, as I saw him, I bounded towards the door, where he stood looking in and beckoning to me.

When I reached the door, he whispered through the grating:

"What name did you give?"

"John Clouse," I answered softly.

"Well," he said, "I have been in every police station in town looking for you, but could not find your name."

He had gone but a little while, when I heard the bolt turn in the door and when it opened a loud voice cried out: "John Clouse!"

"That's me," I answered, as I jumped up. Going into the court room, I was taken before the judge.

"What is your name?" the judge asked.

"John Clouse."

"Where do you reside?"

"Stanhope."

"What is your occupation?"

"Boatman."

"You are fined ten dollars!"

Billy stepped up and paid my fine and I was free. It was the first time I had ever been locked up—excepting, of course, when I was locked in Frank Simpson's tool-box,—and I resolved never again to go through such a humiliating experience.

Such resolutions, however, were soon forgotten and ere long I was again out with my companions. Good fortune rather than discretion saved me from falling into the clutches of the law.

It was while living at Newark that, going out one night with another engineer, I came home in the usual state of intoxication, so much so that wife could not wake me in the morning to go out on my run—at that time the Newark passenger train—with the result that I missed it.

When I got straightened up in the forenoon I went to Hoboken. On reaching the roundhouse, Mr. W. Nichols, the roundhouse foreman, informed me that I could not go to work until I

had seen Mr. W. H. Lewis, the master mechanic. I went over and sat down on a seat near the oil room, my heart full of sorrow, and expecting that when Mr. Lewis came around I would be discharged. If some one had come to me and said:

“Tom, are you happy?” if I told the truth I would say: “No, I am the most miserable man that was ever born. I had fun last night, but now I am paying for it.”

If there was anything I dreaded, it was to be discharged for getting drunk, and before I left home my wife plead with me, if I got discharged to be sure and come right home. Though my wife was not a Christian at that time, her influence kept me from going deeper into sin, and with all my faults she clung to me. Though I had caused her many, many sorrowful days, she was never unkind to me, and a tear from her would always go farther with me than a cross word.

While sitting on the bench and wondering what would happen I saw Mr. Lewis coming towards me. He came and sat on the bench beside me and for quite a while he did not say a word. Finally he turned to me, his big Christian heart manifest in the tears that filled his eyes, and said:

“Tom, don’t you think it is about time you gave up being so foolish?”

“Yes, Mr. Lewis,” I said. “I know I am fool-

ish ; but if you'll give me another chance I'll try and do better."

"All right," he said, "I will. Go and take out a coal train to Philipsburg."

I was so happy to think I had not been discharged that I hurried home to tell my wife. She was waiting, expecting to hear that I had lost my position. When I told her that I was going to take out a coal train, she threw her arms around my neck (I can feel them yet), and tears of joy ran down her face. I had not run a coal train for several years ; but I took one of the old leaky engines and made the trip to Philipsburg. Got back all right, and the next day was back on my old run.

I have never forgotten the kind words spoken to me as they came from the warm heart of Mr. Lewis that day.

Years before, when Mr. Bassenger was our superintendent, I frequently had a similar experience. Like Mr. Lewis, he too was a Christian man, and oftentimes after he had received a report of my being drunk, would send for me to come to his office. Closing the office door and inviting me to be seated, he would sit down beside me and would talk to me in a kindly manner, saying :

"Tom, I don't want to discharge you. There is something about you that I like, and you are a good man with an engine." In this way he would plead with me to quit drinking, and I

would promise to do better. Sometimes I would go two, three, or four months without drinking anything, and then I would break away again and be as bad as ever.

How often, after a night of dissipation, one of my associates would come to me and say :

“Tom, do you know that while you were drunk last night, you got into a fight with so and so and injured him?”

Such a statement would cause me the greatest sorrow and I would again determine to quit drinking, but, like many similar resolutions, such a determination was soon forgotten.

This was the kind of life I lived—and this was the kind of life hundreds of railroad men with whom I associated lived—for many years. I continued on in this manner until 1873, when something happened that arrested me in this course and brought home to me with great force the error of my way.

VI

CONVICTED

At the Death-bed of an Engineer—A Decision and an Obligation—"I Wish Papa was a Good Man"—A Wife's Plea.

ONE morning, early in the summer of 1873, having just brought in the Dover freight, on which we had been out all night, as I stepped off the engine, Mr. William Nichols, roundhouse foreman, came to me and said:

"Tom, do you know that Jim McCrea is very sick, over in the Sinclair House?"

"No, I did not know that Jim was sick," I answered. "I guess I will go right over and see him," and immediately started.

Wending my way to the hotel, which was directly across the railroad yard from the roundhouse, I entered the barroom, and, stepping up to the bar, called for a drink as unconcerned as I had ever done in my life. Seated at the tables near by were a number of railroad men, drinking and gambling, wholly unconscious of the scene that was transpiring in a bedroom overhead.

Finding my way around the tables I ascended the stairs leading to the second floor, where I

was informed Jim was lying sick. I was startled, on reaching the head of the stairs, by meeting an engineer named Andy Blauvelt, who, with a look of dismay on his face, said :

"Oh, Tom, you ought to have been here a little sooner. If ever a man called upon God for mercy, Jim did."

Stopping for a moment as if thunderstruck, I exclaimed: "Is it possible?"

Jim was a man whose early life had been entirely different from mine. He had had a good father and mother, the former being a local preacher, so that, in marked contrast to what mine had been, the influences of his home life were good. For years we had been bosom companions. In our younger days we had been together on the Erie road at Port Jervis, and through twenty years that had since elapsed we had been associated in all kinds of sin. Because of his training and education, I had looked up to and admired him. I had seen him sinning against God with a high hand, and often had heard him say that he did not fear God, man or the devil. "If I'm going to hell," he would say, "I want a fast engine so that I can run clear through it." It all came before me like a flash, in the few moments that I stood on the stairs. But the solemn hour for him to die had come, and to think that he would call on God for mercy staggered me.

Stepping into the room where Jim was lying, I

stood for a moment looking at him. Just then his wife entered and, turning to her, I said: "Mrs. McCrea, I guess Jim is dead."

"Oh, no," she answered, "we have just given him some medicine to quiet him, and he is sleeping."

She then left the room. When she had gone I went to the bedside and leaned over to see if there was any evidence of life; but saw none. Lifting one of his eyelids, I saw nothing but a vacant stare. Slipping my left arm under his shoulders, I gently raised him up. I then put my right hand under the covering on his breast, to ascertain if there was any heart-beat, but felt none; so I laid him tenderly on the bed again.

Jim was dead. Sitting on the bed, I looked into his face. His whole life came before me like a panorama, and with it came the thought to which my conscience readily assented, that *my* life had been no better than *his*. It seemed as if a voice was inwardly addressing me and I was unconsciously answering. I did not realize that it was the voice of God.

The inward voice said: "Tom, you have tried this old life in all its forms and have found no comfort in it; what would you do if you came to *your* dying hour?"

My answer, an honest one, was: "I would call upon God, too."

Wicked and ungodly as I was, and realizing that there was no hope for me, I always believed

that there was a God who would punish the sinful.

Once more the question came to me :

"Tom, why would it not be better to call upon God, *now?*"

"True, Lord," I replied. Yet still I thought there was no hope for one so wicked as I ; but I went down the stairs determining that if God spared my life, I would try to be a better man. It was the first time that any such thought had come to me, and, yet while I left the bedroom with a desire to be a better man, I still continued in the old life.

During the twenty years of my experience on the railroad, I had often helped to pick up men who had been run over and fatally injured. Sometimes a poor fellow would have both limbs severed from his body or be otherwise seriously injured. Under such conditions, I had often held men in my arms and seen them breathe for the last time. How often I had heard them say : "Oh, Tom, I wish some one was here to pray for me," or : "Tom, I wish that I could see a priest," or again : "Tom, I wish that I could see my mother before I go." But none of these sad scenes, witnessed so frequently, made anything like the impression upon me that the death of Jim did.

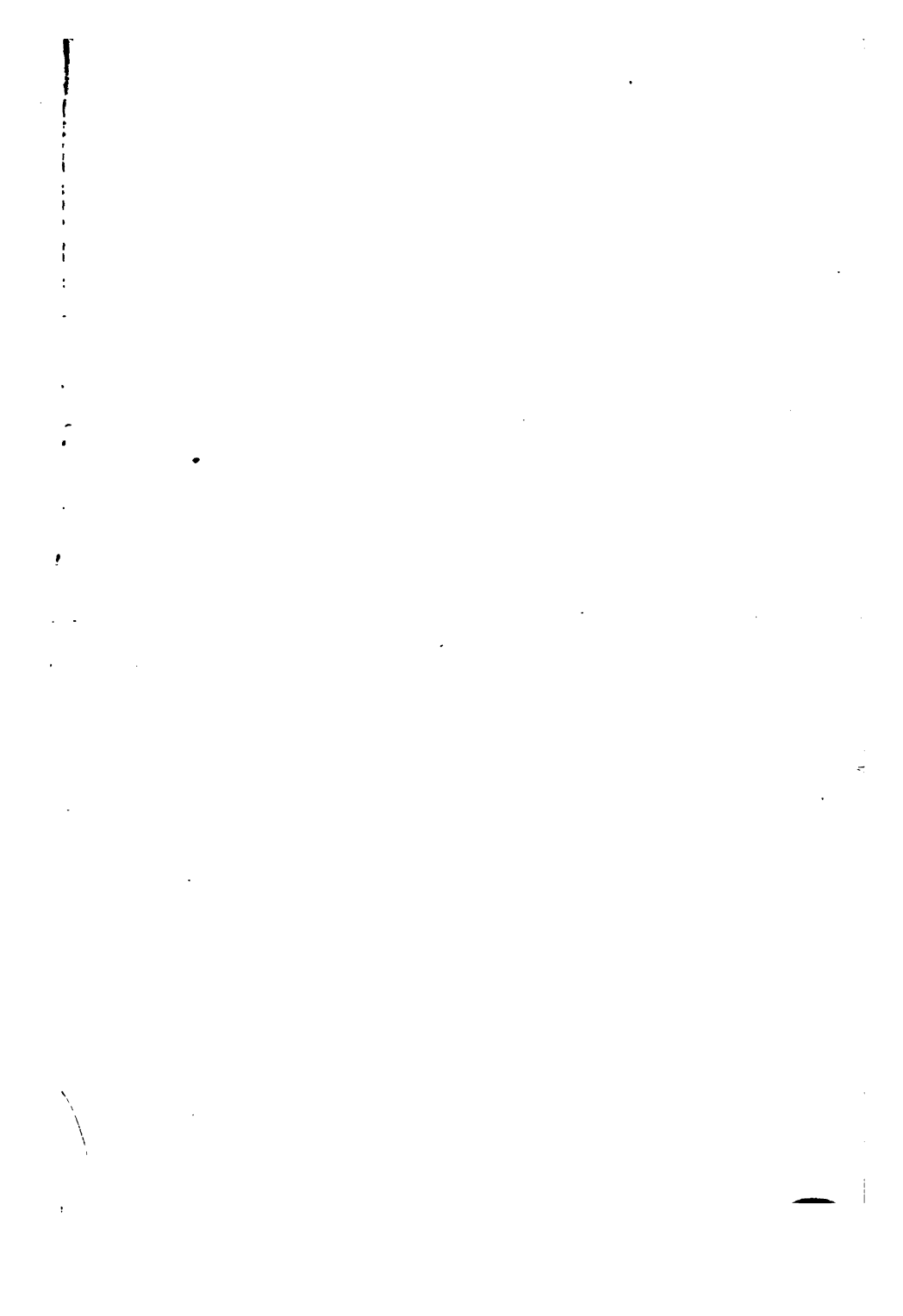
In attending Jim's funeral, I wondered whether the preacher would preach him into heaven ; but as he did not do so, I received no comfort from

what he said, neither could I get rid of the thought that Jim had died calling upon God for mercy.

Thoughts and suggestions of living a better life now began to press upon me. It was the same still small voice that had spoken to me at the death-bed of Jim. Looking back now, I recall how tenderly that inner voice would plead: "Come, Tom, come to Me." When I would answer, as I sometimes did: "I am too wicked," the reply was: "I know all about it, Tom; come to Me!" If I had only known that God was a God of love, how much sooner I might have come to Him.

To rid myself, if possible, of the thoughts which thus troubled me, I went deeper into sin, spending more time than usual away from home, drinking with my ungodly companions. For several months I continued in this way, until, on the thirteenth day of August, 1873, about one o'clock in the morning, while drinking with a number of my companions at the bar of the Continental Hotel in the city of Newark, New Jersey, being under the influence of liquor at the time, an unusual feeling came over me and I called for a Bible. Endowed with a husky pair of lungs, when I called with my full lung power, as I did in this instance, I made considerable noise.

"Bring me a Bible!" I shouted. "Bring me a Bible!"



Hewitt W. J. Aug 13th 1873
We the undersigned do hereby agree to
abstain from all intoxicating and
spiricious liquors, Soda and Root-
beer excepted from Aug 13/1873 to Janu-
ary 1st 1874 from 1 P.M. to 1 P.M. inclusive
The party violating this agreement to
forfeit the sum of Fifty dollars \$50.-

Witness

C. A. Campbell

Erasmus Abbott.

E. J. Skinner
Thompson Heenan
Fred. W. Lyons

Fearing that I would wake up his guests, the landlord, trying to quiet me, said: "If you will only keep still and not wake up every one in the house, I will get you a whole stack of Bibles."

The coloured man was sent up-stairs to find a Bible, and returning with one in a little while, handed it to me.

Taking the Bible from him, I opened it and laid it on the bar. Slapping my right hand on the open Bible, I turned towards my companions, and said:

"Boys, as for me, by God's help, I'm going to quit drinking and live a better life. How many of you will quit with me?"

My companions looked at me in astonishment, but seeing that I was in earnest, three of them stepped up to the bar and, laying their right hands with mine on the Bible, decided with me to quit drinking. I then pledged them, with an obligation, to abstain from all intoxicating drink until the first day of January, 1874; the penalty for violating the obligation to be the forfeiture of fifty dollars.

Having taken the obligation, a pledge was drawn up on a page of the register book of the hotel and signed by each of us.

A fac-simile copy of the pledge, as it was drawn up and signed that morning is here presented, the original being in my possession.

When we had all signed, I cut the page containing the pledge from the register book, and,

putting it in my pocket, started for home. It was about two o'clock when I reached there, and I found my wife waiting for me as usual. How kind and patient she had been with me all these years!

The next morning, having no appetite, I could eat no breakfast, so started off to work. When I got a short distance from the house I remembered my pledge and obligation in the barroom of the hotel, and now, for the first time in my life, I began to pray. It was a beautifully clear day, as I now remember, and stopping in the street and taking off my cap, I looked up towards heaven and said: "Oh, God! if there is a spark of humanity left in the heart of Tom Keenan, help me to keep that vow." And I am thankful to say that God heard that simple prayer and kept me from breaking my pledge.

Returning home one afternoon about this time, I was very much touched in meeting on the street Mr. Charles Bolen, at that time superintendent of the Eighth Avenue Methodist church Sunday-school. Most men of his character usually shunned me. Indeed I have known men who held high offices in some of the Churches to cross the street rather than meet me. Years afterwards, when I came to know these men personally, I asked one old deacon why he crossed the street when he saw me coming, and he said: "Why, Keenan, you were such a giant in sin that I was really *afraid* to meet you."

Not so with Mr. Bolen. He greeted me pleasantly, and, putting his hand on my shoulder in a familiar way, said :

"Tommy, how many children have you got?"

"Two, sir; a boy and a girl," I replied.

"Where do they go to Sunday-school, Tommy?"

"Well," I said, "I don't know that they go anywhere."

"Why don't you send them up to our Sunday-school at Eighth Avenue?" he then asked.

The kind and familiar way in which he addressed me had drawn me to him and I answered :

"Well, I guess I will."

When I reached home I said to my wife : "Mira, I wish you would fix up the children the best you can and send them up to the Eighth Avenue Sunday-school." Such a suggestion from me fairly took her breath, and she looked at me rather questioningly. I then told her about having met Mr. Bolen and how kindly he had spoken to me. Seeing that I was greatly interested in the matter, she was only too willing to act on such a suggestion. The children were dressed in their best clothes, and on the next Sunday, for the first time, they went to Sunday-school. The fact that I had been spending my money in having a good time, prevented my wife and children from being provided with the best of clothes.

Revival services had been conducted at inter-

vals for over a year at the Eighth Avenue church, and, among the many who had been brought in to the church through these meetings, there was one of my old bosom companions, a locomotive engineer named Ed King. For years we had been together and, after his conversion, seeing him go to church with his wife and children, I would envy him, and wish that I could be like him ; but would always reason that there was no hope for me. Consequently I never darkened a church door. In days gone by Ed and I had loved one another and we loved each other still, but for a year we had been separated by the fact that he was a Christian and living a better life, while I was still continuing in the old path. I saw that he was happy, while I was feeling miserable.

My children continued to attend the Sunday-school at Eighth Avenue church and I little realized what my decision to send them there was going to result in. I was more than surprised one night, on getting home from work, to have my little boy, Eugene, look up into my face and as the tears trickled down his cheeks say :

“ I wish papa was a good man.”

The little fellow began to weep as though his heart would break, and I looked at him not knowing what it meant.

I then learned that he had been to the revival meetings at the church, and had given his heart

to God, and he wanted his papa to be a good man like some of the men he heard speak at the church.

Ah ! I wanted to be a good man, but I thought there was no hope for me. What little Eugene said touched my heart, and as soon as I could I slipped out of the house, and, going around to a lumber-yard in the rear of where we lived, I sat down upon a pile of lumber and wept like a child. I wanted to be a better man, but how to become one I could not conceive.

When I reached home the next night, my little girl, Maggie, the apple of my eye, climbed up on my lap and putting her arms around my neck, with tears in her eyes, said :

“ I wish papa was a good man, too.”

The tender pleading of my little girl for me to be a good man again went to my heart and as soon as I could get there, I was again on the lumber pile alone, weeping and wondering how it was possible for me to be a better man. I had been fighting against God ever since I stood over the dead body of Jim in the Sinclair House ; but God did not give me up.

While the pleadings of my children had made a deep impression on me, the effect upon my wife was still greater, though at the time I did not know it. Soon after their conversion, she began to accompany them to the church, to attend the special revival meetings that had been in progress for thirteen weeks.

One night, after supper my wife said to me: "Tom, I hope you are not going out to-night, as I have something to tell you."

I stayed at home that evening and after the children had retired she came to me and, putting her arms around my neck, said:

"Tom, I want to tell you what I have done. You know that, when mother died not long ago, I promised to meet her in heaven. I have wanted to be a Christian for many years but, Tom, you have been so wicked that I thought I could not live a Christian life. Last night at the church I went forward and gave my heart to God, and, oh, Tom, I wish you would be a Christian, too."

I had always considered that Christianity was not a doctrine or a belief simply, *but a life*.

When my wife told me what she had done, I was not greatly surprised as I had been suspecting it, so I pushed her away gently, and said:

"That's all right, Mira; *live it*."

To all her pleadings with me I would only answer that there was no hope, I was too wicked.

God had blessed me with a good wife. Through all my sinful life she had been true and faithful and had spent many anxious hours in worrying about me. She would sit up until the morning hours waiting for me to return home, and, often too helplessly intoxicated to help myself she would patiently and tenderly assist me to bed. How often on Sunday, when I would ask for a clean shirt, so that I might go off and spend the

day with my companions, she would plead with me to stay at home. How many times she pleaded with me not to drink any more, and how faithfully I would promise to comply with her wish, only to come home later in the usual state of intoxication. After making such a promise, I would try to keep from drinking, and when the boys would invite me to drink, I would answer them, "No."

"Well, come and have a cigar," they would then say.

"All right; I'll go and have a cigar with you." And I would go with them to take a cigar, but not to drink. When we reached the hotel or barroom, they would again urge me to drink.

Yielding to their entreaties, I would take one drink, intending to quit at that, but, when I had taken one drink, it was like touching a match to powder, and, ere I realized it, I would be intoxicated. But now for six months I had been sober, having kept the pledge made in the Continental Hotel barroom.

VII

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

A Visit from a Brother Engineer—"Oh, Lord! I mean Business"—"The Skeleton in the Closet"—I Go to Church—A Forty-five Miles an Hour Conversion.

ON the Sunday morning following my wife's affectionate plea to join her in the Christian life, I was sitting quietly in my home. There were no carpets on the floor, but instead a few rag mats were scattered here and there in the rooms. The furniture was nothing to brag of; barely enough to keep house with. Altogether it was such a home as befitted a man who took little interest in it, and of one who enjoyed the society of evil companions more than that of his own family.

As I sat there alone, a knock came to the door, and as I opened it who should walk in but my former companion, Ed King. With him were Harry Sanford and Ed Distoway, who were also old associates of mine. Not only had each of them been converted, they had become active workers in the revival meetings at the Eighth Avenue church.

"Brother Tom," said Ed King, "we have come to sing for you."

As members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, we always addressed each other as "Brother."

"All right, boys," I said, "help yourselves."

I always liked singing, and Ed King knew it. Bringing from their pockets some small hymn books, they sang two or three sweet gospel songs, which I rather enjoyed.

All at once Ed King turned to me, and said:

"Brother Tom, we are going to pray for you."

Before I realized it, all three of them were on their knees. I looked at them in surprise for a moment, and then got on my knees, too. It was a little hard for me, for the reason that my knees were not used to this sort of business; but down I went.

The substance of their prayer was: "God, give us Brother Tom as a Christian companion; for we love him."

The thought "for we love him" expressed in their prayer, touched me very deeply. When they finished praying, they went out, leaving me alone again; but the thought of their love remained. I stayed at home all that day; there seemed to be something wrong with me, but I could not understand what it was. I was under conviction of sin, but did not realize it. A great struggle was going on within, but I did not want to give up sin; it seemed to be my nature to cling to it, because I loved it.

It was becoming quite clear to me, that if I undertook to live a Christian life, there must be an absolute surrender of myself to God. To break away from sin, would be like tearing out my heart; but give it up I must, or die the death of the wicked. In the midst of this struggle, I recalled the dying hour of my old companion in the Sinclair House, which was still vivid in my mind.

About seven o'clock that evening Ed came again to my home, and said: "Tom, come and go with me to church!"

"No, Ed," I answered, "I won't go to church to-night."

Sitting down he talked with me for a little while. When about to go, he reached out his right hand and taking mine, looked me straight in the eye, and said:

"Tom, you and I have been together a good many years."

"That's so, Ed," I answered.

"We have drank and fought together, but we have always loved one another," he said.

"That's true, Ed," I replied.

"Now, Tom, I want to tell you that I have been praying that God might give you to me as a Christian companion. Tom, will you come over on the Lord's side?"

"I will," I answered heartily.

"Then come and go to church with me to-night."

"No, Ed," I said, "not to-night. You take my wife and children and go to church, and, if God spares my life until Tuesday night, I'll come too."

Ed took my wife and children and went to church.

After they had gone I began to clean house. It seemed that just as soon as I had said, "I will," to Ed, the charm of sin had been broken. The strife that had been going on between the spirit and the flesh was coming to an end. That "I will" was what God had been wanting from Tom Keenan through the months that had passed since that death-bed scene in the Sinclair House, and I was now willing to answer to that invitation "Come" which God had been pressing upon me.

Going to a certain drawer I gathered up a pack of cards and some pictures that were there and threw them into the stove. There was a ring on my finger that did not belong there, and I pulled it off and threw it in also.

I then went into the bedroom and got on my knees at the bedside. I could not repeat the Lord's Prayer, and in fact knew nothing about prayer of any kind; but I prayed the best I could, as follows:

"Oh, God! I mean business. If you will convert my soul, I will give up my ungodly companions and my sin, and I promise you to try to serve you and live a better life."

I don't remember whether I said Amen, but like the publican's prayer of old: "God be merciful to me a sinner," God heard and answered my uncouth prayer a short time afterwards.

While I had prayed for God to convert my soul, I did not know any more than a child what the conversion of my soul meant. I knew that something must be done to keep me from sin. I had an idea that some feeling would come over me, or I would receive some kind of a "knock down" or be unhorsed like Saul of Tarsus, and was expecting that it would come in some such way.

The next day, Monday, I ran the express from Hoboken to Philipsburg and return. Oh, what a day I put in! I had never before been afraid of the engine leaving the track; but now I was. If she gave a sudden lurch in striking a curve, I found myself praying: "Lord, keep her on the rails." "Lord, spare my life till to-morrow night and I'll go to the Eighth Avenue church." "Lord, don't let her leave the track."

Tuesday was my day off and I stayed at home all day. What a long day it seemed! I was now anxious to get to church and wished for the evening to come. I wanted to be converted.

There was a drawer in our bedroom bureau, which my wife would never allow me to disturb. It contained a pair of clean sheets, a clean pillow-slip, one of my clean shirts, and a few other things. For years I could not learn the purpose

for which she so zealously guarded the contents of that drawer. Through all the years that we had been married, however, they represented "the skeleton in the closet" to my wife; for with the numerous accidents occurring on the railroad, she was fearful that my mangled remains might some day be brought home, and the contents of the drawer were kept always ready for such an emergency.

When evening came I fixed myself up in the best clothes I had. The white shirt which had been kept so long in the bureau drawer in which to lay me out, was now to be used, not for death but for life. Ed King came to accompany me and, for the first time in my life, Tom Keenan might be seen wending his way to church with his wife, his two children and Brother King.

It would seem as if the devil did not want to give me up and would even stop me after I had started for the church. As I stepped out of the door of our house a boy handed me a note from some of my old companions saying they wanted to see me. I opened the note and, hastily glancing at its contents, tore it up and turning to the boy, said: "Tell them, no; I can't come."

So up to the church we went. I took a seat near the back. The pastor, whose name was Walters, I had never seen before. I was not interested in the singing or the preaching, but was patiently waiting for him to give the invitation for sinners to come to Jesus. There were a

number of railroad men in the seats near me. When the invitation for sinners to come to the altar was given, I knew that meant me and up I got. Reaching out my hand to an engineer that sat behind me, I said: "Come, Fred, and go with me."

"No, Tom," he answered, "I'll wait and see how you make out."

"All right," I said, and walking up the aisle got on my knees at the altar; a guilty sinner, with my sins before me like a mountain, for which I wanted forgiveness and pardon.

The brethren of the church gathered around me and prayed for me. When the time came to close the meeting, I arose to my feet and the brethren began to shake my hand and ask me how I felt.

"Oh," I said, "I feel that I am a sinner."

I might have said: "I feel pretty good; I have done my part now in coming to the altar and I guess I am all right," but I didn't. Here many Christians make a mistake. Instead of asking a person in my position just then, how they feel, they should, from the word of God, have shown me that I would receive the pardon of my sin through a living faith in the Lord Jesus. No, I felt that I was a sinner and I wanted God to convert my soul.

I "meant business" however; and leaving the church went home. After reading the Bible, for the first time, I got on my knees with my wife

and children and with the open Bible before us they prayed for me, that papa and husband might be converted.

Like Saul, I was in darkness for three days, yet I kept praying that God would convert my soul. On Wednesday I ran the Easton mail and on Thursday the Philipsburg express, with the old engine "Pompton." It was now the third day since I had been to the altar and had yet received no light.

It was a beautiful day and the old engine was making about forty-five miles an hour going down Rockport grade; when suddenly, as I was looking out of the cab window, thinking and praying that God would convert my soul, these words, being part of the eighteenth verse of the first chapter of Isaiah came to me, in this way:

"Though thy sins be as scarlet, I will forgive."

"Who will forgive?" I seemed to ask.

"Jesus," the answer came back; and I believed it.

When I realized that my sins were forgiven, that they were gone and gone forever, my heart was immediately filled with joy and I said: "Thank you! Thank you!" and then clapped my hands and shouted: "Hallelujah!" several times.

I continued to shout so that my fireman, whose name was Dexter, sitting on the other side of the cab looked at me in astonishment, thinking I had gone crazy. But reaching over

the boiler-head and taking him by the hand, I said: "No, my boy, I am not crazy; but God has converted my soul and I must shout, I am so happy."

So right there on the engine going through Rockport cut at forty-five miles an hour, God spoke peace to my soul. The charm and power of sin in my life were broken, by simply believing and accepting the promise of God. For thirty years I have been enjoying the sweet consciousness of the peace and love of God in my soul which came to me that day.

Invariably as I have gone through Rockport cut, thousands of times since that day, I have lifted my cap, and said: "Thank God! It was here He spoke peace to my soul." Sometimes, sitting in the train as it passed the spot, I would express aloud my gratitude and turning to the passengers sitting near, I would tell them how it happened.

A great change had been effected in my life. I now loved the society of my wife and children, and found great pleasure in attending the class and prayer meetings at the church.

The preaching did not interest me to any extent unless it was very plain and simple. Concerning the Bible, I was very ignorant, not knowing the Old Testament from the New. In this respect I did not differ, as I learned in later years, from many people of culture and those in the higher walks of life. A friend of mine informed

me recently, that while sitting on the piazza of a large hotel at Nantucket one Sunday, he overheard two ladies discussing the reading of the scriptures at the service from which they had just returned. One said: "Did not the minister read the scripture beautifully this morning? It made me wish that I knew the scriptures better." The other lady replied: "Yes, it was beautiful; but do you know, I could not tell whether he was reading scripture or quoting Shakespeare."

I was quite anxious to acquire a knowledge of the Bible and in this my wife and children assisted me. The family altar which we had unconsciously established on our return home the first evening I went to church, had been continued. As we knelt in prayer to God for His help and blessing, with thanksgiving for what He had done in our hearts and in our home, the voices of each of us in turn, wife, Maggie, Eugene and myself, could be heard in prayer. Would to God it had ever continued so!

On the first Sunday in March, 1874, my wife, my children and myself became members of the Eighth Avenue Church. Responding to our names, we went forward and stood in front of the altar. Next to us stood my lifelong friend, Jim Wright, with his wife and two children, and further on, forming a semicircle around the altar, stood many of my railroad associates, who had

been converted in the special meetings of the few weeks previous.

As the pastor extended to us the right hand of fellowship, in token of the cordiality with which we were received, and admonished us with words of encouragement and hope, the shouts of praise from the "Amen corner" of the church were almost deafening, and among them I could distinguish the voice of my old companion, Ed King.

The freedom of the Methodist Church had always been attractive to me. I enjoyed hearing a hearty "Amen" or "Glory to God," and I soon got to the point where I could utter one too, as occasion might demand. In those days it was a common thing to shout and praise God in the midst of the service; but at the present time altogether different conditions seem to have developed. It reminds me of the "pop" or safety-valve on a locomotive. The old style of safety-valve would go off with a sudden pop, and in doing so frightened some of the nervous passengers by the suddenness of the outburst of steam and of the noise. On the new style of safety-valve, there is what we call a "muffler" or "go easy," which allows the steam to blow off gradually. It suggests to me that, either the fire in the Methodist Church nowadays does not develop that degree of pressure that will cause it to "pop off" a good hearty "Amen," or that some new style of "muffler" or "go easy" has been

invented to restrain it. If some old Methodist happens to get up steam enough in these days to shout "Amen" during the progress of the sermon it is apt to give such a nervous shock to the congregation that the effect of the sermon is spoiled, while the preacher forgets whether he has reached the first, second or third point of his discourse.

The class meeting to which I was assigned was presided over by Brother John Baldwin, as leader; a dear old man of God, in whom I found a wise spiritual counsellor. In connection with the class meeting we arranged to conduct cottage meetings at different homes and for this purpose a Praying Band was formed, consisting of Brothers John Baldwin, Ed King, Harry Sanford, Jim Wright and myself. There is no doubt in my mind but that the visit of three of these brethren to my home on that memorable Sunday morning, a few weeks before, led to the undertaking of this cottage meeting work.

The cottage meetings were greatly blessed of God in the conversion of souls, and the success that attended the work became so well known that people came from far and near to attend these meetings.

VIII

COUNTING THE COST

Another Barroom Incident—Persecution—A Hotel Landlord Converted—An Engine With Two Headlights.

THE news that I had been converted spread over the entire road like wildfire. That such a notorious sinner as I should be converted, was something unusual, and the question that everybody seemed to ask next day was :

“ Did you hear the news ? ”

“ No, what is it ? ”

“ Tom Keenan’s got religion. He’s been converted and joined the church.”

Such a bit of news was unlooked for. It was invariably received with derision, and such remarks as :

“ I bet he’ll be drunk inside of a month,” or
“ I’ll give him until next pay-day and that will be the last of religion with him.”

Some boasted that they would get me drunk and their purpose becoming known to me, I began to realize that it was going to be a hard battle for me to keep sober and live a Christian life. God knows, that the battle to overcome temptations in myself would be hard enough without having my old associates arrayed against me, in

an effort to overthrow me when I was endeavouring to live a better life ; but God was on my side. He is greater than all that might be against me and He gave me a great victory a few days after my conversion.

I was debating in my mind as to whether I should continue to get my dinner at the hotel in Philipsburg, or take it in a dinner-pail. I knew that my old companions would be in the hotel and perhaps try to get me to drink ; but then I thought : " Well, I served the devil in there ; why not serve God there too, now that I am a Christian." So I decided to get my dinner at the hotel, as usual.

I knew pretty well what I would have to contend with, and, when I reached the foot of the steps leading into the hotel, hardly knowing how to pray, I looked up towards heaven, and said : " Lord, give me a good cheek,"—courage was what I wanted—and went in.

It was just as I had expected. Gathered at the bar were a number of my old associates. I went into the wash-room, just off the barroom, and as I did so I could hear them whisper, as they indicated with a throw of their thumbs towards the wash-room : " There goes old Keenan. He's got religion."

Taking off my coat, I rolled up my sleeves, and had gotten a good lather of soap on my hands and arms, when some one behind me, said : " Tom, how's this ? "

Turning around, still rubbing my hands in the soap lather, there before me in the barroom stood Hamp,—a baggage-master. In his left hand he held a tumbler of rum, containing hot water, lemon and sugar. In his right hand he had a spoon with which he stirred the contents of the glass as he held it almost under my nose.

That something had happened to Keenan was evident. Had it been the old Keenan that Hamp was now dealing with, it is probable that before Hamp had time to receive an answer to his question, the old Keenan would have planted his fist on Hamp's face with such force that Hamp, rum and all, would have been sent sprawling across the barroom.

But no; I did not do that with him. Looking him right in the eye across the top of the glass, I said:

"Hamp, you and me have been together for a good many years, and I have pulled you over many a mile of the road."

"Yes, Tom," he said.

"Hamp, have you ever known me to do you a mean, dirty trick?"

"Well, no, Tom, I can't say that I have."

"Hamp, I am sorry that you should be the first man to put a tumbler of rum under my nose and a stumbling-block in my way, when I am trying to turn away from sin and live a better life. You know, Hamp, that I have been no honour to my family, to myself, to the company

or to the Brotherhood ; and your life has been no better than mine." By this time the tears were trickling down my cheeks, and, seeing tears in Hamp's eyes also, I reached out my hand and taking Hamp's right hand in mine, I continued :

"Hamp, I want to say to you I have made up my mind I must love God better than I love rum. God has converted my soul and I don't want any more rum." As I said this I began to shout and praise the Lord.

My old companions at the bar, who were looking on, to see the fun as they expected, were now in tears also ; as well as the landlord who stood dumbfounded behind the bar. Seeing this, I took courage, and, stepping up to where they were standing, I continued to shout, and taking each one of them by the hand, I began to tell them how happy and full of joy I was since God had converted my soul. And right there in the barroom of the hotel the Lord gave me my first victory.

The landlord remonstrated with me for making so much noise, but it would have taken more than that to keep me still, and the boys, as I shook hands with them said : "Tom, you are right ; stick to it."

The landlord died not long afterwards a poor miserable wreck. Hamp climbed down off a box car one day, went into the caboose, and died with his boots on, a poor wreck also ; and I

don't know one of those who were in the bar-room that day who are now living.

My experience with Hamp and his associates at Philipsburg led me to believe that it was going to cost me something to hold up my head as a Christian. Early in my new life I learned that I must stand the scoffs and jeers of my former companions. Having a natural predisposition to fight on the least pretext, I realized that to live a Christian life I must keep my hands down, and often I have been obliged to grab the bottom of my pockets as I called upon God to help me to refrain from fighting.

I have said that my first religious impressions came to me at Hackettstown, through the happy experience of old John Baldwin. I might add that I had no religious training in my youth. While my parents were nominally Catholic, there was no Catholic Church at Franklin Furnace and, as a result, I knew as much about the Catholic Church as about any other church,—and that was nothing. I believed there was a God who would punish the ungodly, but I knew nothing about Him; had heard there was a Bible, but knew nothing about it; did not know the old Testament from the New and I could not repeat the Lord's Prayer. From some source, however, I had conceived the idea that religion was a *life* and in this I believe I was right. To my mind, if a man's religion did not keep him from getting drunk, from fighting and swearing,

it did not amount to much, and the sooner he changed it for one that did keep him from doing these things, the better. I never could understand how any man's religion could allow him to go to church in the morning and in the afternoon get drunk and blaspheme the name of God. No religion, to my mind, was better than that kind.

If my father had lived a sober life and my step-mother had treated me in a more kindly manner, I might have had some attachment for the Catholic Church. Knowing that church, however, only as it influenced their life, the Catholic Church had no attraction for me.

That my parents were Catholics was, of course, quite generally known among my circle of acquaintance. To many who did not know this, it was a foregone conclusion, especially among Catholics, that because of my name—Keenan—I was without doubt a Catholic.

No one, however, had ever heard me utter a word against the Catholic Church, whatever I may have said to or of some of its members. Against the Catholic Church I have not now and never have had one word to say. I had no way of knowing anything of it except through its members or representatives, and when I was brought in contact with some of these, and saw them do or claim that which I did not consider right, I did not hesitate to tell them so. I do not want it to be thought, therefore, in connection

with anything I may say in these pages that I am speaking against the Catholic Church in any way, though I have been unmercifully persecuted by many of its members. I am pleased to say, however, that among my large circle of friends I number many devout Catholics.

It seems strange that, while I was neglecting my family, spending my wages in barrooms, fighting, and blaspheming the name of God, I was considered a good fellow by certain of my acquaintances, but as soon as I turned away from that life and undertook to honour and serve God, I was looked upon as a "heretic," and became the object of their venom and persecution. I resolved, however, to suffer their persecution, without complaint, being anxious above all things else to give my former friends no occasion of complaint against my conduct, whatever they might say otherwise.

In the beginning of my new life, I went out of the roundhouse at Hoboken one day and sat down by the coal-chute. Mr. William Nichols, the roundhouse foreman, was looking on and saw one of the coal-chute men deliberately throw a scoopfull of soft coal down the back of my neck. For a moment I sat still, praying that God would help me to bear it.

As I arose to shake out some of the coal, there stood the man who so severely tried my patience. I don't suppose I looked at him like an angel, and without doubt he must have seen fire in my eyes

as I reached over and grabbed him by the coat collar with my left hand and putting my right fist close to his face, I said :

“ You are a Roman Catholic ? ”

“ Yes,” he answered.

“ Then you can thank God that I am a Protestant and a Christian,” I said, “ for if I were not I would knock your head off your shoulders.” With that I turned and went into the roundhouse, leaving him standing there, surprised that I had not punished him.

The whole scene amused Mr. Nichols very much, and, as I came to where he was, I saw that he was convulsed with laughter, as he said :

“ Tom, some great change must have come over you, for I certainly expected to see you strike that fellow; but I can't help laughing, it looked so funny.”

I remember at one time a certain gang came from Boonton to Tabor on purpose to “ do me up.” They followed me as far as Fanuel Dickerson's barnyard and, threatening me with oaths, came at me, calling me a heretic and other names. Just as they were attacking me, Jacob Randell, a dear old friend of mine, appeared on the scene and stepping in beside me, with a drawn knife in his hand, said :

“ I will put this knife into the heart of the first man that lays his hands on Tom Keenan.” At which they turned and beat a hasty retreat.

During the time that President Sam Sloan was

making a visit to his old home in Ireland, I came down to the roundhouse one morning, dinner-pail in hand. I stopped at a switch shanty to have a word with a switchman, named McCarty, and in the course of conversation I said jokingly, and with a little brogue: "I suppose they will have a great time in Ireland when Mr. Sloan gets there." McCarty did not like it, so he said:

"Tom Keenan, you ought to be the last one to say anything about the Irish; for you are Irish yourself."

"That's all right, Mac," I answered. "I did not mean any harm. I'm not saying anything against the Irish."

"Yes, you are," he said, "and you need not think because you licked me once that you can do it again. You need not try to pick a quarrel with me, for I can show you that I am a better man than you are."

"Hold on, Mac," I replied, "I'm not trying to pick a quarrel with you. I'm not looking for fight."

"Yes, you are," he said, "and I will give you all you want of it."

"Well," I said, "I don't know that because I am endeavouring to live a Christian life, the Lord wants me to lie down and let you wipe your feet on me. I'm a better man physically than I ever was and I think I can prove I am a superior man to you yet."

I knew pretty well that Mac would not want to

fight me; he thought I would not fight, and evidently wanted to domineer me by his bluster. Setting down my dinner-pail, I began to peel off my coat, when Mac suddenly dived into the shanty and shut the door. Concluding that Mac did not want to fight, I picked up my dinner-pail and went on.

We became friendly again next day, and Mac is still one of my warmest personal friends.

When running the Express to Philipsburg, I usually got my supper at the Philipsburg Hotel, in which there was a bar off the dining-room. The landlord was a delicate man, but very kindly disposed. He often took my part when others would cast slurs upon me for living a Christian life. I remember a brother engineer, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, who on one occasion induced a man who was a church deacon to go into the barroom to take a drink with him, and then called me to the barroom door, saying:

"How's this, Tom? Here's a deacon that will take a drink; but you are too sanctimonious."

"That's all right, George," I said. "I thank God for His help to keep me from touching it," and they both laughed at me.

I saw that the landlord did not like the way they jibed me. After a while the landlord was taken sick and the barroom was closed. One day he sent for me to come up-stairs and see him. He was glad to see me and, as we engaged in

conversation I told him about Jesus who came to save sinners, rumsellers as well as rum drinkers, and he asked me to pray for him. I got on my knees and prayed that God would convert his soul.

When I went to Philipsburg again, I got the pastor of the Methodist Church to come and talk and pray with him. I knew he would be glad to come as he and I had often been on similar missions together, witnessing many death-bed scenes. He talked with the landlord, and told him about Jesus who died for him. The landlord believed and gave good evidence of his acceptance of Christ before he died. While his wife, sisters and friends stood around him weeping, he turned to them and said :

“ Don’t weep for me ; these are the happiest moments of my life. Jesus died for me. He was the ransom paid for my soul and I believe it.”

I believe that the landlord died in the triumphs of faith, and why not ? for Jesus said :

“ Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

One of the worst men I ever had to contend with was a conductor who was a scorner, and with whom I ran for a few years.

When he learned that I had been assigned to his run, I believe he would rather have welcomed the devil as his engineer than Tom Keenan. I never tried harder to get along with a man in

my life, and yet I have heard him call me the vilest names that his tongue could utter, and curse me with oaths as foul as ever fell from a man's lips. Through God's grace, I bore it all patiently and I only hope that ere he passes away, he may see himself as God sees him.

How often in getting on my engine I would find my overalls soaked with kerosene oil, as well as my Bible, which I now carried on the engine instead of a bottle of whiskey. The oil, however, did not spoil the print of the Bible, but rather made it shine the brighter. It was said that I carried two headlights on the engine, one on the front end to see the way ; the other, the Bible, the headlight of the soul.

I have learned that "all they who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution," for we are living in a world that crucified Christ. If a man would be a real Christian, he must count the cost, he must crucify envy, pride, revenge, vanity, self-will and the love of that sin which he thinks most of. If he ceases to resist the desires of his own sinful heart and the allurements of a vain world, he is in danger of falling. He who begins the Christian life lightly will soon turn to folly. When one begins to think himself wise and strong and safe and good, he is in the greatest danger.

"Which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first and counteth the cost whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest haply after

he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build and was not able to finish."

IX

VICTORY

A Postal Card With a History—"Oh, What a Prayer!"
—A Freight House Meeting—The Way to Heaven.

THE roundhouse at Hoboken was built in two sections. These were divided by a track that ran directly to the turntable in the centre. The engines were backed onto the turntable from the east and, being turned around, were run out to the coal-chutes on the west, or run into their stalls in the roundhouse, when necessary.

The first stall to the right of the track, on which the engines were run in to the turntable, was enclosed, and partitioned off, serving the purpose of a register room for the engineers and an office for the engine dispatcher. The engineers' room was in the end nearest to the turntable through which it was necessary to pass to get to the engine dispatcher's office at the inner or wide end of the stall.

Running along on either side of the engineers' room were locker seats and at one end, near the office, was the bulletin-board on which all general orders were posted. Next to the bulletin-

board a letter-rack hung, on which letters received for the engineers were placed.

The room was a place of general rendezvous for the engineers. Here they would discuss the latest fast run, talk "engine" until the last minute, and discuss any topic of special interest, and topics were usually plentiful.

The topic of special interest for several weeks had been the conversion of Tom Keenan ; though little was said on the subject when I was present.

On reaching the register room one morning I noticed that there was an unusual number in the room, and, evidently, an unusual interest in my coming.

At once I thought there was something up, but could not imagine what it might be until some one indicated, with a throw of his thumb over the shoulder, towards the bulletin-board. This led me to go and look on the bulletin-board. Finding nothing there of special interest I happened to glance at the letter-rack, where I found a postal card addressed to me.

Whatever the sender had on his mind to communicate was, of course, known to the crowd before I arrived ; one of the disadvantages of corresponding by postal card, and in this instance intended as a slur.

The boys were figuring on a good joke at my expense when I read the contents of the postal, and for this purpose they were all on hand. It was from a rumseller, with whom I had spent a

good deal of money and who missed my patronage sufficiently to at least call the matter to my attention. The postal card read as follows :

"TOM KEENAN :

You had better come and pay your rum bill of \$4.80 and not be going to church.

BEEBE."

I read the postal card and holding it in my hand turned around and said to the crowd :

"Boys, that's an honest bill, and just as soon as I get some decent clothes on my wife and children, and fix things up in better shape at home, I will pay that fellow his rum bill."

What they had thought to be a joke, turned out to be something more serious ; for the homes and families of many of those present were no better cared for than mine. One by one they began to leave the room, with occasion for more serious thought than they had anticipated.

Putting the postal card in my pocket, in the course of a few months I called upon my old friend, the rumseller. He was evidently not expecting a visit from me, for as soon as I made my appearance in his barroom, he acted as though he would rather have been somewhere else. He knew what my fighting qualities were in the old days, and was evidently fearful of undergoing a little personal violence at my hands.

Drawing the postal card from my pocket and

laying it on the bar I said: "Did you send that to me?"

He began to make apologies and said that he meant no harm.

"That's all right," I said, "you just give me a receipt in full on the back of that postal card and I'll pay you. While you are writing the receipt you may just thank God that He converted my soul; for if I hadn't been converted that dirty piece of business on your part would have brought me here and I would have wiped the floor with you."

He is the only rumseller I know of that seemed glad of my conversion; for although it resulted in the loss to him of a good customer, he realized that it saved him a "licking" and the latter would at least have been more painful than the former.

Replacing the postal card, duly receipted, in my pocket I went up to the roundhouse to tack it on the bulletin-board. There were quite a number present when I walked in and as I tacked up the postal card so that the receipt of the rumseller would be in plain view; and the boys might see that I kept my word, I said: "Boys, come and look. Victory! Victory! Praise the Lord!"

Soon after my conversion, in company with a friend, I went to a certain church in Newark one evening. When we reached the church, it was well filled and my friend led me up to a side seat

near the pulpit. I did not know the pastor and could not see a person in the church that I knew. I noticed the friend, with whom I came, say something to the pastor; but it did not occur to me that what he said concerned me.

The meeting opened with the singing of a hymn and as I sat down I heard the pastor announce:

"We will now be led in prayer by Brother Keenan," and addressing himself to me, said:

"Come right up here in the pulpit, Brother Keenan, and lead us in prayer."

My breath seemed to leave me, and as I got on my feet my knees were trembling so that I began to feel as though I could not get up the steps to the pulpit; and there was a great audience looking on. I reached the pulpit, somehow, and putting my knees on the soft cushion began to pray, the best I could. Having had but little education I was crude in my manner of speech and exceedingly ungrammatical; and I knew it. It must have sounded very unlettered and I had hardly finished praying when the devil came at me with all his power, saying:

"Oh, what a prayer!"

"That's so," I thought, and I made up my mind that would be the last of my praying in public.

When the meeting was over I started for home, "Oh, what a prayer" still ringing in my

ears. When I reached there, wife saw that something was wrong and said :

"Tom, what's the matter?"

"Oh, wife," I said, "the devil is whipping me over prayer."

I then told her how it was. We got on our knees and prayed about it but I did not receive much comfort, and when I woke during the night I could still hear : "Oh, what a prayer!"

In the machine shop at Hoboken there was a dear old man, named Whitehead, long since passed away. When I reached Hoboken the next morning I went to see him, as I felt sure that he could help me out of my trouble.

When I got there he was working on a lathe, tapping nuts and bolts. Addressing him, I said :

"Brother Whitehead, I am in trouble."

He was a man who knew much about this warfare, so he said :

"Tommy, what's the matter?"

"Oh," I said, "the devil is whipping me over prayer."

"Just like him," he answered, and at once I began to feel better, as I thought, "Here's a man who knows something about the old devil." I then told him what had happened.

He touched with his right hand the lever that shut off the machine, while the busy hum of the machinery in the shop was going on all around, and turning to me, said :

"Now, Tommy, let us look to our Heavenly Father, and repeat this prayer after me."

This was the prayer which he asked me to repeat, like a child, sentence by sentence :

"Father, I did not pray to Thee *to* the people, but I prayed to Thee *for* the people."

In the twinkle of an eye I saw that what I said in my prayer in the church was not to please the *people*, but to please *God*. My burden was gone at once and I gained a victory over my pride.

From that time on I made up my mind to say and do the best I could for the glory of God.

I remember too, that after I was converted and would undertake to get up in class meeting to speak, my knees trembled so that I thought they would give way under me. That these same legs which had taken me into sin, and had never trembled, should now make such a fuss when I tried to honour and confess Jesus, I could not understand. It annoyed me so that I asked the brethren and sisters to pray, not that the Lord might help me to speak, for I always had a pretty good gift of gab, but that He would keep my knees from shaking when I got up to speak.

About this time I started for New York one Sunday morning, and on reaching Jersey City I saw a crowd gathered on the platform of the Pennsylvania Railroad freight house. Going over to the freight house, I saw that a meeting was in progress, and as I stood on the outskirts

of the crowd, a man stepped up to me and said :

“ Isn’t this Tom Keenan ? ”

“ Yes,” I answered.

“ You are just the man we want ; come right in here and get up on the box and tell these people what the Lord has done for you.”

I followed him to the speakers’ “ box,” a packing-box ; got up on it and began to speak with all my heart.

The next day one of the New York papers came out with an account of a railroad meeting at Jersey City in which a big red-faced engineer from the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad got up and spoke. It gave me quite a scathing. The old devil came at me, saying :

“ There you are again. You have made a nice show of yourself. You had better stay at home hereafter and not attend such meetings.”

A few weeks later I went to St. Paul’s Methodist Church in Jersey City, and, being too early for the morning service, I went into the class meeting which preceded it. The seats in the class room were arranged against the wall all the way around the room, and as I took a seat I noticed a man on the opposite side eyeing me rather sharply. Soon afterwards he stood up to give his testimony, and, still looking at me, he said :

“ One Sunday morning, not long ago, I started for New York to have a good time, and that

usually meant getting drunk. When I got down by the freight house, I saw a big crowd and went over to see what was going on. When I got there I saw that man," pointing to me, "get up on a box and tell that he had been a wicked man and how God had saved him, and I saw that, as I was living the same kind of life, I, too, needed to be saved. Instead of going to New York, I went back behind some freight cars and wept as I never had done before. I immediately turned to God, who has forgiven the sins of my past life and I want to thank God for that man's getting up on that box that morning and telling what God had done for him."

While he was speaking, tears of joy were running down his face and when he had finished, I said :

"Lord, bring on the boxes! I'll get up on them anywhere to tell about Jesus, if it will help to save souls, like this man, and redeem them from lives of sin."

I recall an interesting experience I had some years later which came about under the following circumstances. Having an engagement to speak at a Baptist Church in Newark, one Sunday evening, I concluded—it being a clear, cold day, with enough snow on the ground to make good sleighing—to walk from my home at Chatham to South Orange, a distance of ten miles, where I could take the trolley to Newark.

Physically and spiritually I was in excellent

condition, and before leaving home, soon after noon, I decided, and prayed God's help in doing so, to ask every man I met whether he could tell me the way to heaven.

I had not gone far out of the town, on the country road, when I met a man, and, greeting him, said :

" You'll excuse me, sir, for asking you an honest question. Will you please tell me the way to heaven ? "

Looking at me thoughtfully for a few moments, he answered :

" Well, as I understand it, it is to go to church and to do what the priest says."

" That's good as far as it goes," I said ; " but that is not exactly the way to reach heaven. Will you let me tell you the way ? "

" If you please," he answered.

" Jesus said : ' I am the way, the truth and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me,' " I replied.

" You are right," he answered heartily, and shaking hands we each went our way.

Going on a little further I saw a sleigh which was being driven towards me, in which was a man whom I knew to be a trustee and an officer in the Methodist Church.

" Here," I thought, " is a man who surely can tell me the way to heaven."

As he drew near I stood in the middle of the road, and shouted :

"Whoa!"

The sleigh was stopped and addressing its occupant, I said:

"Brother ———, you are an old man, and have been in the Methodist Church for many years. Will you please tell me the way to heaven?"

It had often been assumed that some day I would go crazy, and, as this good brother looked at me and considered the way in which he had been "held up" so unceremoniously on a country road, he evidently concluded that my mind was really unbalanced. He proceeded to answer my question, by saying:

"Well, to my mind, Brother Keenan, the way to heaven is to 'Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you!'"

"That is right, so far as the law is concerned. But God did not give the law as a means of reaching heaven," I replied. "Shall I tell you the way?"

"Yes, if you please," he answered; fearful evidently to cross or antagonize me.

"Jesus says: 'I am the way, the truth and the life,'" I replied.

"You are right," was his answer.

"All right," I said. "Drive on!" and on he went.

Further along I saw two men coming. They were engaged in earnest conversation, and were evidently on their way to a road house near by. Raising my right hand, I said:

"If you please! Will you tell me the way to heaven?"

Looking at me for a moment, they were inclined to sneer; but could not answer my question.

"Will you let me tell you the way?" I asked.

"Yes," was their answer.

I told them that Jesus said He was "the way" and they listened attentively; then went on.

I next met a coloured man. He was about to enter his house, and, hailing him, I said:

"My friend, if you please! Will you tell me the way to heaven?"

His answer, an honest one—God bless him for that—was:

"Well, boss, I'm sure I doan know."

What a comfort it was to tell him about "the way," how Jesus had shed His blood for sinners, regardless of colour, and that he might know the way by knowing Him. He listened as tears filled his eyes, and I left him in the hope that he would find the way to heaven.

The next one I met was a young man who had been skating and was endeavouring to hide his skates under his coat, preparatory to entering a church.

Hailing him as I had the others, I asked him whether he did not feel condemned for breaking the Sabbath as he had been doing.

He admitted that it was not right. I then told him about Jesus who said: "I am the way, the

truth, and the life." He received my words very kindly. I hope they did him good.

Further on, I saw a one-horse sleigh coming towards me, in which were three young men. Their actions indicated that they were under the influence of liquor. I stood in the middle of the road, with both hands raised, expecting to stop them. But they would not stop.

They knew me evidently, for one of them shouted :

"Hello ! Tom Keenan."

"Where are you going, my boys?" I asked them.

"We're on our way to h——" was their reply.

"Yes," I called after them, "you are in a fair way for it, if you keep on."

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

I now met a man well advanced in years, a well-to-do farmer, who lived in a large house by the roadside. Entering into conversation with him, I made myself known and told him some of my experiences of the afternoon.

"So you are Tom Keenan !" he said, finally.

"Yes," I said, "and may I ask you this question : Are you a Christian ?"

"Oh, yes," he answered.

"How long have you been a Christian ?" I asked.

"Why, I was born a Christian," he replied.

I then endeavoured to show him that no man

was born a Christian, for "that which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," that a spiritual birth was necessary by the exercise of faith in Jesus, who said: "I am the way, the truth and the life," in order that a man may become a Christian. He accepted the truth by simply believing and asked me to pray for him.

Soon afterwards I reached South Orange. Getting on board a trolley-car, I arrived at the church just in time for the evening service.

The subject of my talk at the service was my journey from Chatham to South Orange during the afternoon. It proved to be instructive as well as entertaining to all present, as many assured me at the close.

X

A FAMOUS REVIVAL

"Out ob de Fryin' Pan into de Fire"—Awakening
Among Railroad Men at Port Morris—A Railroad
Men's Praying Band—"Watts" Day—Beginning of
a New Era.

THE Praying Band formed in connection with the class meeting to which I was assigned at the Eighth Avenue Church responded to many invitations from out-of-town churches and the entire Sabbath would sometimes be spent at some point on the line of the road.

The announcement that railroad men—who had been known as such a wicked and ungodly set—would speak in certain churches, naturally attracted large audiences. The force of our testimony was such that many were brought under conviction, with the result that revivals "broke out" in the churches visited, and hundreds of those who attended were converted.

I remember on one occasion, we had been spending Sunday in holding meetings at a church near Washington, New Jersey. Returning to the station after the evening service we found that we had some time to wait for the "Milk"

train, on which we would return to our homes in Newark. There were no lights at the station since no business was transacted on Sunday. After sitting for a short time on a baggage truck, which stood on the platform, Brother King suggested that we have a prayer meeting. Dropping on our knees around the baggage truck, Ed King led in prayer. While he was praying, for some reason I was led to open my eyes, and as I did so I saw something dark moving around the circle on the opposite side of the truck. I watched this dark object until it came near me and then I saw it was a coloured man.

Reaching up I grabbed him by the coat collar, pulled him towards me and, as I did so, said to him in an undertone:

"Do you love the Lord?"

"Oh, yaas, boss, I lub de Lord," he answered.

"Can you pray?"

"Yaas, sir, I ken pray."

"Well, get on your knees," I said, "and, when that man stops praying, strike in!"

"All right, boss," he answered, eagerly.

A coloured camp-meeting had been in progress for a week in the woods near by, and this, it developed later, he had been attending.

He must have been a backslider, for he had evidently come away from the meetings without "taking up his cross," that is to say, taking part in the meetings. As he knelt by my side I noticed that he was trembling all over and with-

out doubt was wondering what would next happen to him.

When Brother King had finished praying, I nudged the coloured brother with my elbow—at which he fairly jumped—as I said to him: “Now then, pray!”

As I did this, his arms flew apart like a pair of wings, and throwing his body backward, in characteristic negro fashion, his arms extended full length, his face and eyes turned towards heaven, in a most pleading attitude, and his voice trembling, he prayed as follows:

“O-oh Lord! hab marcy on dis poor nigga! Lord, I tried to git 'way from yeh up to de camp-meetin'; I denied yeh and would na tak up ma cross; but Lord, I got out ob de fryin' pan and drapped raight into de fire.”

As he prayed, Brother King kept slapping him on the back. This encouraged him, and realizing by this time that he was in the hands of friends, he grew eloquent in his prayer, spurred on by the “Amens” of the company around the truck. We left him later with the hope that this experience might prove a perpetual brake to his backsliding.

Port Morris, New Jersey, in 1875, was the terminus of two coal and freight divisions of the Lackawanna Railroad, the crews “doubling,” or making a round trip over the road east to Hoboken and return, and west to Scranton, Pa., and return.

Port Morris was in the strictest sense of the word a railroad town, almost every interest there being entirely connected with the railroad. At this time there was no church in the place, and under such conditions the moral atmosphere of the town was not of a very high order. Indeed, it was decidedly otherwise ; for the railroad men in general were given to dissipation. Sunday was usually a gala day, on which the diversions included hunting, fishing, drinking and gambling.

An earnest and devoted Christian worker, Miss Mary E. Mills, was teaching school here ; and becoming deeply concerned for the salvation of railroad men and their families, resolved to do something for them.

Miss Mills succeeded in organizing a Sunday-school composed of some twenty boys and girls, all children of railroad men. In this work she received the heartiest support and encouragement of Mr. Waters B. Day, better known as "Watts" Day, who at this time was engine dispatcher at Port Morris ; but, because of living at Hackettstown, he was away from Port Morris on Sundays, and could not engage in the actual work of the Sunday-school.

The Sunday-school sessions were held in a small brick building attached to the roundhouse. This building was originally intended to be used as a machine shop, and on this account has always been spoken of as the "machine shop."

When Miss Mills learned of the meetings that were being held by the railroad men in churches along the line, she went to Mr. Day and asked him if he would not arrange for the Praying Band to come and hold meetings at Port Morris. He suggested that she speak to Ed King and Tom Keenan about the matter, and so on several occasions, when our trains stopped at Port Morris, the little maid came to the engine and pleaded with us to come there and hold meetings for the railroad men. We promised to do so and a Sunday was decided upon for our coming. The only place available for the meeting was the old "machine shop," and this Mr. Day had fitted up with boards for seats, in lieu of chairs or benches.

When it became known among the railroad men of Port Morris that Ed King, Jim Wright, Tom Keenan and others of their old associates were coming there to have a "revival meetin'," they laughed; thought it a good joke and threatened to have some fun in connection with our visit. A conductor, named Stuart Fraser, bought a quart of whiskey with which, he said: "I'll have old Keenan so full when he gets here that he won't be able to preach and that will be the last of the revival meetin'"; while the others promised to be present at the meeting to see the fun.

On the day the meetings were to take place, our kind-hearted Superintendent, Andrew Rea-

soner, provided a locomotive to take us from Hackettstown to Port Morris, the party consisting of Brothers "Watts" Day, Ed King, Harry Sanford, Jim Wright, Garry Garabraut, Bob Baldwin, Dr. S. R. Osmun, Governor John Hill of Boonton, Rev. Charles E. Little, pastor of the Methodist Church at Hackettstown, and myself. With us were Ed King's son, Hudson, Jim Wright's Harry, and Tom Keenan's Eugene. The boys sang in the meetings during the day, their sweet singing of gospel songs being used to soften many hearts.

When the meeting commenced the "machine shop" was crowded and some unable to get inside were standing at the windows and in the doorway. All the railroad men who could be there were on hand to see the "fun." As the meeting progressed, it was evident that the spirit of God was present in great power; strong men broke down and wept like children, and, among the first on their knees, calling upon God for mercy, was Stuart Fraser, who had threatened to get me drunk. He had evidently forgotten about the quart of whiskey—what became of it I never learned—for he became so filled with the grace of God at that meeting that the supply is not yet exhausted. A large number of railroad men were converted at the memorable meetings of that day and the revival, of which it was the beginning, resulted in the conversion of over one hundred railroad men. Sixty of them were

formed into a class meeting of which "Watts" Day became the leader.

The awakening at Port Morris and the organization for Christian work among railroad men subsequent thereto, "Watts" Day thus graphically describes in a letter to the writer, under date of February 1, 1904:

"During the week, previous to the visit of the Praying Band from Newark, I saw all our men and gave them a pressing invitation to be present; exacting promises of them. I told them Tom Keenan would be present and I wanted them to hear him. It became noised about that Tom would *preach* and I did not deny it. Much prayer had been previously offered for the services. The result was that the Holy Spirit's presence was manifest as soon as we entered the 'machine shop' to hold the first meeting; not a few tears being shed before a word had been spoken. Seriousness was depicted on every countenance, saint and sinner.

"It had been arranged through the suggestion and insistence of my pastor, Rev. Charles E. Little, that I should take charge of the services, immediately after he had preached a short sermon. Such a thing I had never done, but his argument was:

"'You are in official capacity here. You have been a Christian for some years and enjoyed the confidence of the men and you *must* do it.'

"I trembled like an aspen leaf. Before the sermon ended, however, all man-fearing spirit had gone. I was ready for anything, and so were all the brethren.

" 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth' was the text. The sermon was pointed, and evidently received with the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit. At its conclusion I started a suitable hymn, after which I expected to speak first; but before I could get to my feet, Brother Tom had the floor.

"He gave us a brief recapitulation of his life before his conversion. Among other things that I recollect was this:

" 'You boys know me; but who of you ever knew me to have any money? I could not have it in my pocket without getting drunk. I never had a pocketbook; but I've got one now,' and putting his hand in his pocket he pulled it out and holding it high above his head said: 'There it is! And there is money in it and it won't be spent for rum.'

"He then gave a description of his home before and after his conversion. Men wept like children. Not a few in their working clothes without handkerchiefs wiped away their tears on their greasy coat sleeves and their bare hands. Some of them tried to hide their emotions by covering their faces with their hands and bending down behind those who sat in front of them.

It was wonderful what an impression his talk made upon many who were present.

"Talk about leading a meeting! It needed no leader. After Tom, Ed King spoke with telling effect; also, Garry Garrabraut and others. Finally I got an opportunity, and, after a brief exhortation in which the Lord gave me—as with those preceding—great liberty, I gave the invitation to those who desired to become Christians to rise to their feet. Ten or twelve did so. Some of them began to talk. One said: 'If religion can do for Tom Keenan what he says it has, I need it in my home and in my heart.'

"The evening meeting was nearly as powerful, some eighteen kneeling for prayer at the board seats; several of whom were converted.

"Hon. John Hill, ex-member of Congress, and an enthusiastic worker in the Young Men's Christian Association was present at these and at a number of the meetings that followed.

"About this time a convention of the Young Men's Christian Association was being held in New York City. Among the delegates was Mr. Lang Sheaf, of Cleveland, Ohio, the first man appointed as secretary of a Railroad Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Mr. Hill brought him to Port Morris on two or three occasions to participate in the meetings. These men rendered valuable assistance.

"Rev. C. E. Little, above referred to, who had

been interested in the meetings from the first, and had watched the progress of the work, insisted that the Lord had commissioned the Christian railroad men for a greater work than this at Port Morris. He also insisted that we spend a Sunday in his church at Hackettstown and take full charge of the services, and it was so arranged.

"It seemed that the Lord had called us to such work as this and we must go. It fell to my lot to have charge of the services at Hackettstown—and in my own church at that. The Sabbath came. We were 'all with one accord in one place' and the power of the Holy Spirit was present. Penitents came forward by the score and there were many conversions.

"At the conclusion of the evening meeting, Rev. Mr. Little called us into the parsonage, and advised us to organize ourselves. After some thought and consideration it seemed a wise thing to do, and we organized under the name of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Christian Association. Harry Sanford was elected president; W. B. Day, leader of devotional meetings and Dr. S. R. Osmun, secretary. The other members being Ed King, H. H. Hotchkiss, R. F. Baldwin, Garry Garrabrant, Peter Gulick, Jim Wright and Tom Keenan.

"The organization, however, has usually been referred to as 'The Praying Band.' Every Sunday thereafter found us in some church on the

line of the road, usually holding four or five meetings during the day.

"Everywhere the Lord was with us in great power. The altars were filled with seekers in nearly every church visited. This work was kept up aggressively for several years and to a greater or less extent has been kept going by some of the members of the Band to the present time."

To the credit and honour of "Watts" Day, it should be said that for many years previous to this time he had been known as the only Christian man on the entire road. He is now the oldest employee in continuous service, in the motive power department of the Lackawanna Company.

When sixteen years of age, "Watts" was converted and joined the church. Two years later, in 1860 he began railroading as wood passer on the engine Delaware on which I was engineer.

He was soon promoted to the position of fireman on the Morristown express, and in 1863 became an engineer. In 1872 he was appointed engine dispatcher at Port Morris, which position he held until 1889, when he resigned and returned to his old place at the throttle. He is still running a switch engine in the railroad yard at Port Morris.

The fire of God's love which was implanted in the heart of "Watts" Day when he was converted in 1858, burned brightly through all the years of his railroad career; and in the midst of

ungodly companions, with sin abounding on every hand, his noble Christian character shone out as a star.

In connection with the recent dedicatory service of the remodelled Methodist Church at Port Morris, in which "Watts" has been the prime mover for twenty-five years, the following beautiful tribute was paid to him by a friend :

"To have lived for an ideal; to have some fixed purpose in life, and that purpose the uplifting of our kind; to be able to look back on a life, well spent, even as the shadows are lengthening towards evening, crowns advancing age with honour and robs the grave of its terrors. Such a life has been lived by our friend and brother, "Watts" Day, and as we gaze into his clear blue eye and note the firm lines of his clear countenance, where temperance, peace and hope are so happily blended, we know that his is a spirit under preparation by the Master for another life of usefulness when this life is over. In that grand and tragic story of that hero of Victor Hugo's imagination, Jean Valjean, there is a long period in his life when he is the moving, restraining and benevolent spirit of a large manufacturing town. For years he was the counsellor and intimate friend of all people; he was the godfather of the children, the banker, the doctor, the lawyer and spiritual counsellor, and, in times of emergency or calamity, they turned instinctively to him.

"All this, for a long term of years, 'Watts' Day has been to the railroad men of Port Morris and their families."

Such was the character of the man to whom Miss Mills looked for counsel in the work she had undertaken in the old "machine shop"; and such was the man whom we chose as leader of the Praying Band which accomplished such noble Christian work among railroad men for many years succeeding the Port Morris revival.

Meetings were continued in the "machine shop" until 1876, when the Lackawanna Railroad Company erected a building to be used as a schoolhouse and church combined. The church stood at the end of a row of twelve cottages belonging to the company. A singular incident, in connection with the church building and the row of houses of which it was the end, was the fact that at one time there were eleven Christian families and one non-Christian family living in the row, and the settlement was referred to, by the irreverent, as "Christ and His twelve apostles."

Later the church was moved across the track to the more populated section of the town, at which time it was enlarged and beautified.

Port Morris is now a thriving town, most of the railroad men living there owning their homes.

"The great revival of 1875," as it is now spoken of, was not confined to Port Morris. While it began there, it spread over the entire

road and hundreds of railroad men owe their conversion to the great awakening of that year. At the present time, probably no railroad corporation in the United States has upon its pay-rolls as many Christian men as the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, now known as the Lackawanna System. This happy condition, together with the general transformation in the lives of railroad men throughout the United States, had its origin to a great extent in the religious interest which developed at Cleveland in 1872 and here in 1875.

The great transformation that had taken place in the lives of their employees, through these Christian influences, was apparent at once to the officers and directors of the Lackawanna Company, who granted every encouragement and help to the work. Accidents became less frequent because men exercised greater care in handling the property of the company, the men being now actuated by Christian principles, which heretofore had been almost unknown among them. Drunkenness and dissipation began to be unpopular and a new era, both for the company and the men, began.

To the men, it meant happier homes, because of the Christian character of the father and other members of the family ; while the wages, formerly spent in dissipation, were now applied to providing the comforts and necessities of life for wife and children. To the company, it meant

that greater care in operating the road and running its trains, prevented train wrecks, which are such a tremendous factor in reducing the earning capacity of railroads, and thus the dividends to stockholders,—for which railroads are primarily operated,—were greatly increased.

It is a matter of record that for nearly twenty-five years, succeeding the religious awakening of 1875, there was not a passenger killed in the cars of the Morris and Essex Division of the Lackawanna Company, and to nothing can this be attributed more than to the Christian influence that actuated the lives of many of the employees and through them exerted a helpful influence upon the entire railroad constituency.

It was for this reason that the general manager of the company, Mr. W. F. Hallstead, and the superintendent, Mr. Andrew Reasoner, though not professing Christians, gave their hearty support and encouragement to this Christian work, while, of course, in addition they had a personal interest in seeing their employees living righteous lives. This interest was also shared by the president, Hon. Samuel Sloan, and his son William S, third vice-president, who later assisted in establishing several Railroad Branches of the Young Men's Christian Association on the system. It was not an unusual thing for some members of the Praying Band to be allowed their wages for two, three, or even four days at a time, when sent by the officials to remote points

on the road to conduct religious services for railroad men, thus indicating their substantial interest in helping their employees to become Christians.

XI

HUNTING AND FISHING

Smoking Versus Hunting—A Crack Shot—The Sleep of Peace—Convincing a Lawyer—Fishing for His Soul.

ATTENDING church one Sunday morning, during the prayer I leaned forward over the seat in front, and, as I did so, a whiff of a strong pipe, which a man who sat in the seat in front had in his pocket, greeted my nostrils. I had never looked upon smoking as a sin, but on this occasion it occurred to me that it was a filthy habit. While I enjoyed smoking, I made a solemn resolve that I would never carry an old strong pipe in my Sunday clothes. This incident led me to discard the pipe altogether and thereafter I confined my smoking to cigars.

Sitting with Jim Wright, smoking a cigar, in front of a cigar store in Newark, some time afterwards, I began to estimate what it cost me for cigars ; and, as I did so, I thought of the enjoyment I might derive from spending the same amount in hunting, which was one of my greatest pleasures.

Throwing the cigar which I was then smoking into the street, I said :

“ Jim, I’m done.”

The words had hardly escaped me when I felt sorry that I had uttered them.

"Done what?" Jim asked.

"Done smoking."

"For how long, Tom?"

"Just as long as God lets me live."

Having thus committed myself on the subject, as soon as possible, I walked home, and shutting myself in the bedroom, got on my knees and told God how I had committed myself before Jim Wright and asked for His grace to help me to keep from smoking. God answered this prayer also and from that day I have not had the least desire to smoke.

Hunting, however, has always been a hobby with me, and I have had the pleasure of hunting woodcock, partridge and quail with some of the noted wing shots in this country.

One of these was Sam C——, a business man of Newark, with whom I have had many interesting experiences. Sam was not a Christian, and though he enjoyed a nip from a flask which he generally carried when hunting, he was a man of noble principle, and had such respect for me as to even refrain from the flask when we went off together.

Mentioning Sam in this connection recalls a hunting trip I once had with him. We had been out all day, near Nicholson, Pa., and as night came on we found accommodation at a little country hotel.

After supper I sat in the hotel parlour for a short time, while Sam sauntered out into the bar-room. I had every confidence in Sam that he would not drink while we were together; so I gave myself no concern about him, and being weary, I retired early and soon fell asleep.

Sam enjoyed getting things going in a bar-room, and, as the countrymen dropped in during the evening, the temptation for him to have some fun with them was too great for him to resist. I must have been asleep a couple of hours, when I was awakened by the racket in the barroom underneath; Sam's voice being distinguished above the rest, which told me clearly that he had broken loose. Grieved and sorry, rather than provoked with him, I slipped on my trousers and shoes and went down-stairs. Opening the door leading from the hall into the barroom, surprising them in the midst of their hilarity, I blurted out:

"Ah, Sam, I am surprised at you. I thought that you would have had respect enough for me to refrain from this sort of thing while we were away together; but now I am ashamed of you."

Looking around upon the company in the bar-room, all of whom were awed by my unexpected appearance, I told them how God had saved me from that kind of a life. As I proceeded with the story, tears ran down my cheeks, and before I had finished, they were all visibly affected. I

urged them to turn to a better life and, leaving them, returned to the bedroom.

A few minutes after I had gotten into bed, I heard Sam's heavy footsteps on the stairs, and in a few moments he burst into the room, saying :

"Tom Keenan, get right out of bed and get on your knees, and pray for me," as he threw himself on his knees at the bedside and began to weep aloud.

Getting up, I knelt beside him, and prayed ; and when I had finished, he insisted upon getting in bed with me, although there were two beds in the room. By this he evidently meant to atone for having offended me, and together, we slept the sleep of peace.

On one occasion, while hunting with Sam in the vicinity of Waterloo, we fell in with a prominent lawyer, whom I had known for many years, and who lived in a beautiful mansion near by.

Many of my associates in the old days were men prominent in the social and business life of the community, and indeed of the State—lawyers, doctors, merchants and statesmen. Glancing back along the pathway of life, I recall many of these who, charmed by a worldly life, shortened their lives and filled early graves.

No one of them stands out more prominently in my mind than does the lawyer whom we met on this hunting trip. We had been warm friends in the old days ; a more social fellow I never knew, with the merriest ring in his hearty laugh

I have ever heard. We loved each other's company and remained warm friends even after I had turned away from the old life of sin.

His father was wealthy, and at his death left the family in very comfortable circumstances. The lawyer was the oldest of several sons and daughters and, on the death of his father, became the head of the family; all of whom lived in the home near by. On meeting us, his invitation to spend the night with him at his home was so hearty and genuine that we gladly accepted.

As we gathered in the dining-room to eat, his mother took her place at the head of the table, Sam sitting at the other end. On one side sat the lawyer and his three sisters, and on the other side his three brothers and myself, bringing me opposite to the lawyer. Although he took no interest in religion, he called upon me to ask the blessing.

During the progress of the meal, the conversation drifted to a discussion of the Christian life as compared with a life of worldly pleasure, and so strongly did I maintain my position for the former that the lawyer charged me with being a fanatic on the subject of religion and temperance.

"Whether or not I am a fanatic," I declared, "if I can convince you that I am right, will you believe me?"

"If you convince me, I will," he asserted.

Rising to my feet, I stood in my place, each of

the family still sitting around the table. Standing there, addressing myself to the lawyer and calling him by his first name, as I always did, I said :

"You and I will now go back to the old days in the town just beyond the hill. You recall when we stood at the bar of a certain hotel in that town and clicked our glasses together as we enjoyed ourselves in that worldly life to the full?"

"Yes," he said.

"Do you recall how we went through the merry glee of the ball-room until the small hours of the morning, without a thought of anything but gratifying our desire for pleasure?"

"I certainly do," he answered.

"Do you recall that among our associates in those days were Al ———, Ack, ——— and Jim ——— whose bodies now lie in yonder cemetery?"

"Yes, Keenan ; I remember them."

"Now come with me and we will go to the cemetery where lie the bodies of our old associates. We will call them one by one from their graves and ask those old companions whether I am right in having turned away from that life which led them to fill untimely graves."

Still standing in my place at the table, I said :
"We are now in the cemetery. Let us first go to the grave of Al ———, and calling him from his grave, we'll ask him whether I am right on this important question."

Knocking on the table as though we were at his tomb, I called :

"Al ——, come up out of your grave! I want to ask you a question.

"I am here in the home of your friend and mine. He contends that I am a fanatic on the subject of religion and temperance. You tried the old life to the full and through excessive indulgence in strong drink, you went down step by step until you finally filled an early grave; while I turned away from it to live a better life. Was I right?"

He answers—or rather I answer for him :

"Tom, it was the best step of your life; stick to it."

"All right," I reply, "go back into your grave."

Addressing myself to the lawyer again, I said :

"We will now visit the grave of another of our old associates."

Again knocking as though on his headstone, I called :

"Ack ——, come out of your grave and answer me a question! You, like Al —— enjoyed that old life to its fullest extent. Do you recall that day on the engine when sitting in the cab I plead with you to turn away from it? Do you recall your reply, when you said you would give all you possessed if you could accept the simple gospel as I had? And although you were a lawyer, an orator and a politician, highly esteemed

at one time in the community, that old life dragged you down until you were led to commit forgery and eventually committed suicide and filled a dishonoured grave? Am I right in having accepted the truth as it is in Christ?"

His answer was: "You are right, Tom! Trust Jesus. Don't drink; it was drink that brought me here."

"All right," I said, "you may go back into your grave."

Addressing the lawyer again, I said: "We will now visit one more grave."

Up to this time the family had not been much affected, but when, as I knocked again, I said: "Jim —— come out of your grave," I noticed that they were all a little startled, for the one I now called was none other than a brother-in-law to the lawyer, one who, many years before, had married one of his sisters.

"Jim —— do you remember when you came to yonder town, a young man in the prime of life, with as bright prospects as ever opened up before any man? Do you remember how you prospered in business to the extent that you erected for that business one of the finest buildings in the town? Do you recall how that in the midst of your prosperity you began to drink and entered into a life of sin which led you step by step downward? Do you remember when you came into this home, where I am now standing, and, taking a beautiful girl by the hand, a

daughter and sister of the members of this family, promised to be true to her and love and honour her until death?" The mother and sisters were now weeping. "Do you recall how you continued in your downward course, until you lost your business and filled a drunkard's grave, crushing the heart of that pure girl whom you had made your wife until she finally died, broken-hearted——?"

"Hold on, Keenan, hold on," said my friend, the lawyer, rising to his feet. "I am a lawyer. I have plead many a case before the courts of the State of New Jersey and have heard many cases plead; but I have never heard such a plea as that. Keenan, you are right. Stick to it!"

Some months later, as my train stopped at the town near where he lived, I saw him at the station and calling him to the engine, as he stepped on the deck for a moment, I put my arm around him, and calling him by name, said: "Do you expect to die as you are living?"

"No, Tom, I do not," he answered, very frankly.

Like many another man who expects some time to turn away from sin, he continued on in the old life for several months, when one evening, after spending the day in town, in driving a pair of spirited horses towards home, as he was about to cross the railroad track, instead of continuing across, the horses turned and went up the track, he being in the wagon either incapable or unable

to manage them. They had gone but a short distance, when an express train shot around the curve and, running into horses and driver scattered them on each side of the track. The train was stopped and backed up to the scene of the accident, and there were found the mangled bodies of the horses and further on the bruised form of my friend, the lawyer, dead.

His sad end suggests that passage from the scripture: "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

For many years I had a run which allowed me to be off two days each week, not including Sunday, on which day we never thought of working, as there were no Sunday trains on our road in those days.

I loved to fish for trout, and hunt with dog and gun, so frequently spent my off days in fishing and hunting. One day a friend who was a prominent business man of Newark and an earnest Christian, met me and said:

"Brother Keenan, I have a partner, Mr. N—— who would like to go fishing with you some day; and, as he is not a Christian, I hope that God will help you to fish for his soul."

His partner was a wealthy young man, but inclined to be wayward and was considered the "black sheep" of the family.

Meeting Mr. N—— soon afterwards, we fixed upon a day to go fishing. Finally the day came;

but, before starting out, I promised the Lord that I would pray with him before we cast a line. We met at the station, got on board of the train, and went as far as Stanhope. Leaving the train here we travelled some distance across the country until we came to the head waters of the Musconetcong River. Putting on our wading boots, and having adjusted our rods and lines, we started out into the stream. All at once I remembered my promise to pray with him and a cowardly spirit came over me. Looking up I breathed a prayer: "Lord, help me to live up to my vow." We were now in the midst of the stream, and about ready to cast our lines, when, turning to Mr. N—— I said :

"Mr. N——, I suppose you know that I profess to be a Christian man."

"Yes, Mr. Keenan; I have heard so."

"Well, Mr. N——, I want to tell you that, before I left home, I promised God I would pray with you before we began to fish; and if you have no objections I would like to do so now."

He took it very kindly, and in a gentlemanly manner said :

"All right, Mr. Keenan; I have no objection to your doing so."

I always like to get on my knees to pray and, as we were most too far from the bank for me to get back, I found right near me a big stone, sticking out of the water. On this I put my

knees and, taking off my hat with my left hand and holding the rod with my right, closed my eyes and prayed to Him who has promised to hear and answer prayer, that He would bless this young man. When I had finished praying I looked at Mr. N—— and was surprised to see him standing, his head reverently bowed, his hat in his hand.

Putting on our hats, we started in and had a real happy time fishing, and I don't think that a single word on the subject of religion passed between us all day.

I did not see Mr. N—— again for about six weeks, when one Sunday morning our door-bell rang, and, going to the door, Mr. N—— stood before me. I saw that there was something wrong and inviting him into the parlour, closed the doors.

He then opened his heart to me and said :

“Mr. Keenan, that day we went fishing together I made up my mind that I would not drink any more. I got along nicely until yesterday. I expect soon to be married to a very estimable young lady and in view of this some of my friends, whom I met in New York last evening, insisted that I break a bottle of champagne with them. I did so, and am sorry to say, before I knew it I was drunk, and now I am ashamed of myself. I did not know of anybody to whom I could come and talk about the matter but you.”

As he said this, tears were streaming down his face. I comforted him as best I could, and then knelt with him and prayed that God would help him and give him deliverance from the curse of strong drink.

As he arose to go, I said: "Between here and your home, as you go along the street, pick out some landmark, some tree, or telegraph pole or hitching-post, and, looking up to God who loves you and gave His Son to die for you, commit yourself to Him."

He thanked me and bid me good-morning.

For two months I saw nothing of Mr. N——, when one day the door-bell rang and, opening the door, I saw a carriage standing at the curb in which he sat. His face was lit up with a happy smile as he said, in a cheery voice:

"Come, Brother Keenan, I want you to take a ride with me; I have something good to tell you."

"All right," I said, and as I went to get my coat and hat, I thought something must have happened, seeing he called me "Brother Keenan." When I got into the carriage and we had started off, he said:

"Brother Keenan, since I saw you last, I have been married. My wife and I have just returned from our wedding trip, which we spent at Thousand Islands. In the different hotels where we stopped there was champagne and all kinds of wine on the table; but I want to tell you that

I did not touch a drop. Better than that, I have been converted, and have joined the Presbyterian Church, and now they have just elected me a deacon in the church."

He made as much noise in telling me about it as though he were a Methodist.

At the present time Mr. N—— is one of the wealthiest citizens in the city of Newark. He takes a deep interest in missions and is always pleased to learn of drunkards being saved.

I have always been glad that I kept my vow, and that I used the right bait in fishing for his soul on that fishing trip.

XII

INFIDELS

An Interview With the President of an Infidel Club—
Another With One Who Wanted to Know Where
Cain Got His Wife—An Engineer Who Tried to be
an Infidel.

AN honest doubter has always had my sympathy and no one would go further than I to clear the mind from the cloud of doubt with which it may be enveloped; but the average infidel I have met has been so filled with the spirit of "I am wiser than thou," and "wisdom hath at last found in me her prophet," that I have little patience in dealing with them. My arguments were sometimes rather practical and forceful than intellectual, and the infidel usually came out second best.

My first experience with such an individual came about under the following circumstances. On being assigned to a run which necessitated my living at South Orange, I was deprived the privilege, which I greatly enjoyed, of attending the Woman's Christian Temperance Union meetings at Newark. My presence was appreciated by the women, who looked to me to act as

"bouncer," in ejecting any unruly individual that might attend; my services in this respect being frequently in demand.

Happening to be in Newark one Sunday afternoon, I dropped into the meeting which, when I arrived, was nearing its close; and, being invited to speak, I gladly consented. As I sat down, I noticed a man in the centre of the audience stand up and begin to talk. Immediately, however, Mrs. Blanchard, the president, was on her feet in an endeavour to prevent him from speaking. He persisted in his efforts to be heard; but she was equally persistent in preventing him. Finally she prevailed and he subsided.

It seemed strange to me that the man had not been allowed to speak, and I felt a little offended with Mrs. Blanchard for having so abruptly silenced him. When the meeting closed she came directly to me, and said: "Brother Keenan, I trust you will not think unkindly of me for stopping that man from speaking, but he has caused us considerable annoyance. He is president of an infidel club, and comes here and insists upon speaking in the meetings, and it is almost impossible to prevent him."

As she said this, I glanced over in the direction of the president of the infidel club and began to "size him up." To deal with such a man was a new experience for me. He remained standing in the place where he had arisen to speak, and

was evidently waiting an opportunity to "tackle" me.

Mrs. Blanchard turned away to speak with some one else, and, as she did so, the president of the infidel club approached. The hall was now nearly empty. Coming to where I stood, and addressing himself to me in an abrupt manner, he said :

"Can I be saved?"

Looking him over from head to foot, hardly knowing how to take his question, I answered him in a rather nonchalant tone :

"Yes ; any man can be saved who is willing to get on his knees humbly before God and ask Him to save him."

"I'm willing to do that," he replied.

His ready answer perplexed me more than before, so I said :

"Are you? Then get on your knees and pray." And down on his knees he went, just as though he were used to it.

Being a little suspicious, I did not get on both knees beside him simply bending one knee on the floor. In this position I was a little higher than he. He began as follows :

"Lord, if there be a God ; some say that Buddhism is right ; others say that Mahometism is right ; others say that Brahmanism is right. Now, Lord, if there be a God, we don't know——"

"Hold on! Hold on!" I interrupted, as I

grasped him by the shoulder. "‘Lord, if there be a God;’ do you call that praying?"

Turning his face slightly towards me, he "peeled his eye like an onion," and, glancing up at me from the corner of his left eye, said :

"You should not disturb me while I am praying."

As he said this he arose to his feet ; I was on my feet just as quickly. For a moment or two he seemed so provoked that I really thought he was going to fight, and I was certainly ready to meet him on this basis in case he showed any disposition to do so. He continued to insist that I had no right to disturb him while he was praying, my interruption having evidently prevented him from delivering himself of the "prayer," which undoubtedly he had spent much time in the preparation of for such an occasion. I told him if he wanted to pray as a man who wished to be saved, and one who was sincere should pray, he had no right to say : "Lord, if there be a God," and I quoted him Hebrews 9 : 6, "for he that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." If he would pray in this way, I assured him, I would not disturb him ; but I wanted no more of "Lord, if there be a God !"

"All right," he said, and for the second time, got upon his knees.

I did not even bend my knee this time, but stood over him to await developments. He be-

gan as before : " Lord, if there be a God, some say that Brah ——"

" What's the matter with you," I said, as, reaching down, I grabbed him by the coat collar, and, lifting him clear off his knees and on to his feet, I struck an attitude as though I would " boot " him—and I never felt more like doing so to a man in my life—as I said :

" Now, you get out of here ! Get ! " I shouted.

Seeing my threatening attitude, and concluding that my argument would be more forceful than eloquent, he grabbed his hat, made the shortest possible track to the door, out of which he went with rapid strides, and never came back to disturb the meetings again.

The women of the Christian Temperance Union have declared ever since that the Lord surely sent me that day, for the purpose of delivering them from their enemy.

In 1901 through an arrangement made by the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association with the Lackawanna Company, I was granted leave of absence for several months, to assist in conducting evangelistic meetings for railroad men in connection with some of the Railroad Branches of the Young Men's Christian Association.

After spending six weeks on Long Island with the Long Island Railroad Branch visiting and holding meetings in towns in which railroad men live, I went to Indianapolis, Indiana, for two

weeks, where, in addition to meetings at the rooms of the Association, it was customary to hold noon meetings in the railroad shops. This was a daily occurrence during my visit, the meeting each day being in a different shop.

It might be stated here that the practice of holding shop meetings has become a permanent feature of the work in eighty-seven City and Railroad Young Men's Christian Associations. Thirty minutes of the noon hour are generally used for this purpose, into which is crowded a programme of vocal and instrumental music, a scripture lesson is read—usually some incident in the life of Christ—and a brief explanatory talk is given by some minister or layman. The helpful character of this work is manifest in a better moral atmosphere in the shops; a greater interest in church work; more cordial feeling created between the men themselves, less profanity in the shops and a deeper interest in their shop work on the part of the men. Catholics as well as Protestants attend the meetings. No attempt is made at proselyting, but every man is urged to be loyal to his own church. In this way the meetings have been found to be both desirable and profitable to the men and to the employers.

During the first few days of my stay at Indianapolis, I heard the secretary asked by some of the members, on several occasions:

“Has Tom met Mr. Blank yet?”

From what was said in connection with this

question, I gleaned that Blank was an infidel who took delight in tearing the Bible to pieces and propounding the usual questions as to where Cain got his wife; how the whale swallowed Jonah; the mistakes of Moses, etc.

Personally, I was not anxious to meet any such person, as argument on such points had never had any attractiveness to me. I had no time to waste in such discussions, and have always been willing that they be discussed by men who had intellectual training for such things; while I would rather use my knowledge and experience in telling men of the power of Christ, which, applied to a man's life, will make of him a new creature in his desires and purposes.

One day as we were concluding the meeting in the boiler shop, of which I learned later Blank was the foreman, I noticed that the men did not disperse as promptly as usual, but waited as though expecting something further to transpire.

While shaking hands with the men, as I usually did at the close of each of the meetings, before I knew it I was shaking hands with the foreman, when some one intimated that he was the infidel the boys had been so anxious for me to meet.

Still holding his hand and looking him in the face, I said to him:

"Do you know that I would rather meet the devil himself than meet you?"

He was so amazed at such an expression from me, that he withdrew his hand from mine instantly and stood for a few moments dumb-founded ; while the men around us began to snicker.

"That's true," I said, "I certainly would."

I had taken him completely by surprise and he hardly knew how to recover himself. I had thus gained the advantage of him.

"See here," he said finally, "I want you to answer me one question."

"I'll do so if I can," I replied, "and if I can't answer it, I'll tell you so."

"Can you tell me where Cain got his wife?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "I'll be honest with you and say that, in the first place, I don't know, and, in the second place, I don't care where he got her. I got mine back there in 'Jersey' and she is a good one. If Cain got his from the same place, I'll bet he made no mistake."

A burst of laughter from the shopmen greeted my response to his question, and, seeing that he was discomfited, I walked away, while the shopmen, as they returned to their work, continued to laugh at the unique way in which I had confounded the champion of infidelity.

In a few days a letter addressed as follows was received at the Railroad Branch :

Rev. Tom Keenan, D. D., in care of Railroad Branch Y. M. C. A., Indianapolis, Ind.

It was the first time I had ever been thus addressed, and I asked the secretary, who handed me the letter, to open it, as I was fearful as to its contents. We found it to contain a list of some fifty questions, which the foreman of the boiler shop wanted the "Rev. Tom Keenan, D. D." to answer. I left the questions with the secretary, to do with them as he thought best, and have not heard from Blank since. I presume that he is still looking for information as to where Cain got his wife.

Few railroad men, however, are infidels, though some of them try to be. Jack Armstrong, who bought Fred Heizman's ticket and was one of the engineers who went with us to California in 1868, was one of these. He was a fine specimen of physical manhood. He stood over six feet tall, was broad-shouldered, had a will like iron, used to enjoy gambling; but took no interest in religion. Not only did he take no interest in anything that pertained to the Christian life, he took pride in asserting that he was an infidel. He was a brother-in-law to Ed King, having married Ed's sister, whom he influenced to his own way of thinking. He took delight in antagonizing Ed and myself in our efforts to help our fellow men. We loved Jack, however, and would have done anything to favour or help him, if he needed us.

One day, soon after my conversion, while running my train to the mouth of the tunnel, near

Hoboken, some one jumped on the track in front of me, waving a red flag, compelling me to stop. I shut off the steam, threw back the reverse lever, applied the brake and, as the train stopped, before I realized it, an oath slipped from my lips. In my old life I had been a very profane man, and unconsciously and from force of habit, the oath escaped me. It was hardly uttered when I said: "Oh, Lord, forgive me; I did not mean to swear."

Just as the engine stopped, who should I see standing by the track but my infidel friend, Jack. It occurred to me that he must have heard me, but I was not certain that he did.

Getting on the train, Jack came to Hoboken, and when I reached the roundhouse he was waiting in the register room, and said:

"Tom, what was the matter with you out at the tunnel?"

"Nothing, Jack; why do you ask?" I now realized that he had heard me swear.

"Oh, nothing," he answered, as he walked away.

A feeling of condemnation came to me at once, as I felt that I ought to have owned up to Jack that I had uttered an oath when stopping the train at the mouth of the tunnel. Thinking the matter over as I went home, I resolved to confess my weakness to Jack as soon as I saw him.

The next morning, at Hoboken, I hunted him

up and, taking him into the register room, where I had failed to make the confession I should have made the day before, and in the presence of a number of the engineers, I said :

“ Jack, do you remember asking me yesterday, what was the matter out at the tunnel ? ”

“ Yes, Tom, I do.”

“ Well, Jack, I will tell you. I was not man enough to own up to you then that I swore; but I did, and I am sorry for it. I did not mean to do it; it slipped out before I knew it, and I hope you will forgive me for not owning up to you like a man when you asked me about it.”

“ That’s all right, Tom,” he replied, and I felt greatly relieved. To make such a confession, particularly to Jack, was a little trying; but I was glad I did it and I am sure that he thought better of me for doing so.

This incident recalls a similar experience I had about this time with Captain Burt, which came about as follows :

There was one man in my old life whom I hated to the extent that I would adopt any means to wreak vengeance upon him. It was Captain Burt. I really believe I had murder in my heart towards him, because of an accident to my train, in connection with which he endeavoured to send me to prison.

Some years before, as Ed King was coming east on the Easton mail, Jim Allen being with him in the cab of the engine, the crew of a

freight train on the west bound track was placing some cars in the siding at Chatham. When the Easton mail had passed the freight train, Ed saw that the flagman of the freight was in a near-by orchard, picking apples, thus leaving his train unprotected. As they passed me a little later, going west with the Hackettstown mail, Ed remarked to Jim that he thought I would run into the freight, the flagman not being on the track to stop me. Feeling certain that the flagman would not return in time, Ed got off his engine at Millburn and asked the operator whether there had been an accident at Chatham; but as the dispatch announcing the accident had not yet gone over the wire, he did not hear of it until he reached Newark.

Before the flagman returned to the track, I had reached and passed the point at which he should have flagged me. Receiving no warning that the track was occupied, I kept right on and, before I had time to stop, ran into the freight, killing a brakeman and wrecking several cars.

The flagman had evidently tried to get back in time to stop me, for when the rear car of my train had passed, he stood beside the track, holding a red flag in his hand.

Captain Burt, who was one of the detectives employed by the railroad company, sat in the cross seat near the rear door in the last car. Seeing the flagman standing by the track, he at once concluded that I had deliberately run by the

flag—an unpardonable violation of the rules. After the crash, he came to the engine, and on learning that a brakeman was killed accused me of running by the flag and of being responsible for the death of the brakeman, notwithstanding my protests to the contrary.

To every one else at the scene of the accident, it looked as though I was at fault, though I knew that I was innocent. Captain Burt arrested me on the spot and taking me before a magistrate at Morristown, charged me with the death of the brakeman. Had it not been for the kindness of a friend, named Jim Bentley, who furnished bail, I would have been imprisoned.

Captain Burt exerted himself in every possible way to secure my indictment for manslaughter; but, upon the testimony of Ed King and Jim Allen, who saw the flagman was not at his post, I was acquitted by the coroner's jury.

On this account, I felt justly embittered towards Captain Burt and lost no opportunity of manifesting my feelings towards him; but in some way I had been kept from doing him bodily injury. The fact that he was a professing Christian, and a member of the church, did not elevate him in my judgment, but the contrary.

For years I had not seen or thought of Captain Burt, until, some time after my conversion reflecting on the subject of forgiveness, and becoming fully persuaded as to the attitude of a

Christian towards one who was his enemy, like a flash the thought came to me :

“How about Captain Burt?”

Half aloud, I said: “Oh, Lord, I had not thought of him.” As soon as I could, I got upon my knees and asked God to help me to forgive him. God answered my prayer, for, when I arose to my feet, the enmity I had felt towards him was gone, and I determined that the next time I saw him we should become reconciled. Meeting him soon afterwards, I extended my hand to him, saying: “Captain Burt, God has converted my soul; I would like to have you forgive me and shake hands with me.”

“No, Keenan,” he answered, “not if I stood on the portals of heaven, would I shake hands with you,” and he turned and went on.

“All right,” I said, as I too went on, praising God that I had been led to do my duty as a Christian, though Captain Burt would not forgive me. Every time I met him thereafter, I greeted him pleasantly; but he would not recognize or notice me.

Several years afterwards, while attending a meeting in the North Baptist Church in Newark, a young man sitting next to me became convinced that he ought to go forward and become a Christian, and I urged him to do so. He agreed to go if I accompanied him. As I did so, the pastor said:

“Brother Keenan, you have brought him for-

ward, now pray with him," and I prayed aloud that God would bless him.

As the meeting was dismissed, I heard some one behind me say :

"Brother Keenan, I want to shake hands with you."

Turning around I grasped the outstretched hand of Captain Burt, who, unknown to me, was attending the meeting and witnessed the scene which had just taken place at the altar.

From that evening I had no warmer friend than Captain Burt. A few years later, as he lay dying, he sent word that he wished to see me ; but before I could reach him he had passed away. Otherwise, I might have had one more hand clasp from him just before, and when he was almost at, " the portals of heaven."

To return to Jack Armstrong. A few years later, Jack's health began to fail, and, backing his engine into the roundhouse at Kingsland one day, he remarked to a few of the men standing near, as he stepped off the engine :

"Boys, I've backed her in for the last time ; I'm going home to die."

His home was at a little country town on the line of the railroad and here he remained for some time. Truly his last run had been made ! As his health continued to fail, he sent for an infidel doctor, a friend of his, who lived at some distance. This doctor came to see him, and, after treating him for a time, finally informed him that there

was nothing further he could do to help him. By this time Jack had taken to his bed and was slowly wasting away. Knowing that he was opposed to anything of a religious character, his friends refrained from visiting him, so that, with the exception of his wife, he was left practically alone.

Meeting Ed King at the roundhouse one evening, he said to me :

"Tom, I'm going up to see Jack to-morrow ; and I want you to pray that God will give me a message to take to him before he dies."

"Go and see him by all means, Ed," I said. "God bless you in going ! I will pray that your visit may be a blessing to Jack." He had been on my mind for a long time, and I would gladly have gone to see him if I thought I could have done him any good.

When Ed reached the house where Jack lived, he entered, and, addressing himself to his sister, Jack's wife, told her that he had come to see Jack. Ed was a man who knew no fear and, when his mind was made up to do a certain thing, nothing would stop him. This was evident a few moments later, for his sister realizing the purpose of his visit, burst into tears, and said :

"I don't thank you one bit, Ed, for coming here to bother my husband when he is so sick."

"With all due respect for you, Hattie, as my sister, I am going in to see Jack and give him a

message, though all the devils in this town should try to prevent me from doing so." And in to see him he went.

Entering the bedroom where poor Jack was lying in bed, Ed said :

" Jack, I've come to tell you about a physician who has never lost a case."

A look of hope came into Jack's pale face, and his wan features brightened perceptibly, as, looking at Ed, he asked in a weak voice :

" Who is it, Ed ? "

" Jack, it is the Lord Jesus Christ, whom you have rejected so long. He has never lost a case, and He will bring you out all right if you will let Him."

Poor Jack turned his face to the wall and began to weep. In a little while he turned back again, his face wet with tears, and said :

" Ed, I wish you would go and get Tom, and ask him to forgive me for the way I treated him ; and you, too, Ed."

" That's all right, Jack," Ed replied. " I know that Tom has forgiven you and is praying for you ; and I would like to pray with you, now, if you wish me to do so."

" I'm pretty weak, Ed, but if you will help me to get out of bed, so that I can get on my knees, I would like to have you pray with me."

Together they knelt at the bedside in prayer, Ed in the prime of health, his heart and voice going out to God imploring mercy and pardon

for one who had rejected Him so long, while poor Jack at his side, his once stalwart form now a physical wreck, was bowed in sorrow and repentance, manifest in the tears which streamed from his eyes.

Helping him back into bed, Ed encouraged him to put his trust fully in God and bade him good-bye.

Jack lived but a few days after this visit from Ed. Each time his wife went into the bedroom thereafter, she would find him on his knees at the bedside, praying. He would get out of bed to pray, but was too weak to get back in again.

XIII

CHARMED

A Bird Charmed by a Snake—Causes of the Downfall of
Railroad Men—A Wreck and its Sad Sequel.

WHILE running a freight train in the early sixties, one day, when nearing Morristown, I noticed the peculiar action of a bird which, flying in a circle in the air, was gradually drawing nearer to the ground. In those days freight trains did not run on any regular schedule. If there was anything along the line that interested us, we would stop long enough to investigate; particularly if it was a patch of water melons, a tree of ripe cherries, or one containing nice fall pippins; all hands being allowed to sample them before we proceeded. On the day on which I was attracted by the bird, we were on an up-grade and running very slowly. A brakeman who was riding on the engine, noticed the action of the bird about the same time that I did, and said to me:

“Tom, what’s the matter with the bird?”

“That bird is charmed,” I answered.

He seemed inclined to doubt my word, so I shut the throttle, and as the train stopped almost immediately, I said:

"Come with me and I will show you that the bird is charmed. You will find that there is a snake in the grass, there."

The brakeman followed me off the engine, and we walked carefully through the grass in the direction of the bird, which was now much nearer to the ground than when we first saw it. As we went, I stopped and picked up a stone. We had gone but a little way when I said to the brakeman :

"There he is. See him?"

And there he was ; his head elevated and his bright eyes glistening in the sun ; the bird still charmed, and flying quite near him.

"As soon as the charm is broken," I said to the brakeman, "the bird will fly away," and, as I spoke, I threw the stone at the snake. He ducked his head, the spell was broken, and the bird flew away, free, escaping its own destruction and death.

I have never found any one who could explain how a bird is charmed ; nor can I understand how it was that the serpent beguiled Eve. The fact remains, however, that birds are charmed by snakes and men are charmed by sin ; and we believe it, because we see it.

Why was it that for so many years I resisted the entreaties of an affectionate and faithful wife ?

Why was it that I neglected my home and my family ?

Why was it that after promising to quit

drinking, I would be drunk again before I knew it?

Why is it that when the pathway of life is marked by the wrecks of 150,000 men and women, who fill drunkards' graves each year, that men continue to imbibe the intoxicating cup?

Why is it that men are indifferent to the claims of God upon them or continue to indulge in sin, until their homes are broken up, their wives are broken-hearted and their children become a public charge, or are led into vice or crime?

It is because they are charmed by sin, and, unless the charm is broken, they go down step by step, or like the bird, circle by circle, to their own destruction and an untimely end.

It may seem strange that there was such a downward tendency in the lives of railroad men in the early days of railroads in this country, and some may be led to ask the reason for it. To my mind it can sufficiently be explained by the fact of a bad environment, the tide of evil surrounding men in railroad life being so strong, it was difficult for men to resist and stem it.

I remember John H——, who came on the road as a brakeman on the freight train which I was running. He had a Christian mother who, knowing the character of railroad men, gave him good advice as he left home, and said: "My son, you are going among drinking, swearing and wicked men; but whatever you do, don't drink."

Like many a boy leaving home under similar circumstances, he promised his mother that he would heed her advice.

Under the jibes of his companions, however, it was not long before John gave way and took his first glass of lager. Having taken the first, it was easy to take the second. Having committed himself, the third was easier still. A good rule for every young man would be, never to take the first glass ; for the man who never takes the first glass can never become a drunkard.

John worked hard and faithfully and was soon promoted to be a freight conductor. Later, having passed the examination, he was made conductor on a passenger train. Among those who rode on his train were men, members of the same lodge to which John belonged, who professed to be his friends, and, when giving him a grasp of the hand, would have a whiskey flask in their pocket and invite him into the baggage-car to take a drink. The flask would be placed on the shelf in the closet. Some baggage-cars were little short of being barrooms, and many of those who were members of the same lodge with John were using their influence, with a bottle of whiskey, to deadhead their way over the road. While John had a good position and plenty of money, and was deadheading these "friends," he was a first-rate fellow in their estimation, and they would often ask him : " John, what can I do for you ? "

Time went on, and John acquired the appetite

for drink, until one day he was called up in the office and discharged for being drunk. His "friends" were all very sorry for him, but that did not provide bread for his family; so his "friends" advised him to open a saloon, which he did, but did not prosper, for the reason that his heart was too big and, besides, he was too good a customer himself. The time came when all he had was gone; his health failed and he died. I saw him lying in his coffin, his wife standing by, without means to bury him.

The next morning I endeavoured to find some of the "friends" whose influence had dragged him down, and one of the first I saw was one who used to break a bottle of wine with John, and ride with him in a barouche. Jumping off the engine and reaching out my hand to him, I said:

"You have always been a friend of John H——?"

"Sir?" he said, questioningly.

"Are you still a friend of John's?" I said.

"Yes, sir," he answered, rather stiffly.

"Well," I said, "he lies in his coffin and his wife has nothing with which to bury him. Will you give me something to help her to lay him away?"

"Oh, Tom, you are always preaching," he said, as he turned on his heel and walked off. That was all the sympathy *that* "friend" had, though one of the principals in dragging John down and causing him to fill an early grave. John was no

friend to the church, but while his so-called friends would do nothing, the church provided the means with which to bury him.

"What bait do you use?" said a saint to the devil.

"When you fish where the souls of men abound?"

"Well, for special tastes," said the king of evil,

"Gold and fame are the best I've found."

"But for general use?" asked the saint. "Ah, then,"

Said the demon, "I angle for man, not men,

And a thing I hate

Is to change my bait,

So I fish with a woman the whole year round."

Charley ——— was a conductor on a passenger train. He enjoyed the confidence of the officials and of his associates to the fullest extent, and was a happy, genial fellow. After his conversion he became an active worker in the gospel chapel in the little town where he lived, and was also leader of the weekly covenant meeting. His train ran through a very aristocratic section, and many of his passengers were of the fashionable set. A frequent passenger on his train was a fashionably dressed woman, who in handing him her ticket one day, gave him with it a note, which, on reaching the rear of the car, he read. The note suggested a clandestine meeting. Instead of instantly returning to the woman and informing her that he was a Christian man, that he had a wife and children, —the latter grown to be almost young men and women,—and that he could not think of acting towards her in anything but an honourable way, he yielded to the temptation and met her at the

place appointed. He went the way to her house. "With her much fair speech she caused him to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

Thus Solomon pictured a man ensnared as Charley was. His Christian companions on the road plead with him to turn from the course he was following, but with no avail, though he realized, to some extent, to what it would lead him.

To shield him from public condemnation, and her children and self from shame and disgrace, his faithful Christian wife bore up under his unfaithfulness for several years. Often through these years she would send a letter to the secretary of the Railroad Young Men's Christian Association with the request: "At the railroad men's meeting to-morrow, please pray for a broken-hearted wife and disgraced children," as she hoped and prayed that her erring husband might yet return to his family and his God.

In the full vigour of life, he was taken sick and died in the house of her who had lured him from all that was pure, holy and good; and he left as a heritage the record of a man who had sacrificed his character, dishonoured his wife and family, and forsaken his God.

From the inception of the work of the Railroad

Young Men's Christian Association at Hoboken, it was customary on New Year's Day to invite all the employees of the company to take dinner at the association rooms. It was not unusual for men who never visited the rooms at any other time to call on such an occasion,—when they were always warmly welcomed by the secretary and the members.

On New Year's Day, some years ago, early in the afternoon, as the secretary stood at the head of the stairs, he was surprised, as well as pleased, to see an engineer coming up-stairs who had never visited the rooms.

Extending his hand to him, he gave him a hearty greeting and a warm welcome.

This engineer was a man who might be characterized as being indifferent to everything that pertained to Christianity or the church.

He was now about fifty-five years old, of fine physique and for years had run one of the fastest trains on the road. As well as having had the influence of a Christian home in his youth, he was blessed with an earnest Christian wife, but, even under these circumstances, he had drifted along, rejecting every influence that would lead him to become a Christian, until he had become a scoffer and made light of everything that pertained to godliness. For thirty years I had known him. I had often seen him in meetings, conducted by the Railroad Men's Praying Band, so deeply moved that tears would run down his

cheeks and, approaching him kindly, had often urged him to yield to his convictions and accept Christ, but he refused. He had now reached the point where he said uncomplimentary things of those who became members of the Young Men's Christian Association, and ridiculed them. But this did not affect his welcome to the rooms of the association on this occasion.

After spending the afternoon in partaking of the hospitality provided on this New Year's Day, he expressed the pleasure it afforded him to have been so nicely entertained, and then departed for the roundhouse to get his engine in readiness to take out the Buffalo express that evening. The weather conditions are such as railroad men dread; a nasty foggy night; such conditions as produce a slippery rail, and prevent the men on the engine from seeing any considerable distance ahead. The fog on the river prevents the ferry-boats from connecting promptly with the trains, on which account there is an unusual delay in starting.

The engineer and fireman of the Buffalo express are seated in the cab of the engine anxiously waiting the conductor's signal to start, when the elevation of the lantern in the hand of the conductor finally indicated to the fireman that they can now proceed.

The fireman calls "All right." The engineer instantly grasps the throttle lever and, beginning to pull it out gradually, at the same time with

his foot he touches a lever which communicates with the sand box, just behind the bell, and allows sand to pass through the sand pipes to the rail directly in front of the driving wheels, which, slipping a little at first, soon reach the spot where the sand has been dropped and then taking a firm grip on the rails the train glides out of the station. Gathering speed at every revolution of the wheels, in a few minutes they shoot into the tunnel, and soon afterwards they are speeding on over the vast stretch of the Hackensack Meadows, now enveloped in fog, every pound of steam being utilized to make up, if possible, the time lost by the delay in starting.

At Paterson, fifteen miles out, the first stop is made. Passengers alight from and board the train, and in response to the conductor's signal, "All aboard!" they again proceed as before, every member of the crew exerting himself to make up the time that has been lost.

Again the engineer "gives her sand," pulls open the throttle, gradually draws the reverse lever towards the top notch which brings the engine to her highest speed, and in a few minutes that immense train is flying over the rails at a speed of forty miles an hour.

While going at this rate of speed, which is still being increased, they approach an overhead bridge, about one mile west of Paterson, where, just beyond, and hidden by the mist of the night and the bridge from the watchful eye of

the engineer, some miscreant has opened a switch on the main track in front of this onrushing train.

Without a moment's warning, that great engine with its heavy train of Pullman cars shoots in to the open switch, and, before the engineer has time to apply the brake or reverse the engine, she has plunged into a string of cars loaded with iron ore, standing on the side-track.

In a moment of time, that engine stands buried in the wreckage of the ore cars, stripped of everything from the headlight to the cab, and is completely enveloped in the steam which is escaping from every pipe connection on the boiler.

As soon as the flagman has been sent back to protect the train, the other members of the crew and the passengers rush forward to see what has happened.

The volume of steam hissing from the engine prevents their too near approach, and they begin to look about to find the engineer and fireman, who are nowhere to be seen.

A faint voice from beneath the tender falls on their ears and drawing near, they find the engineer, who, with one leg broken in two places, his hands, arms and face burned almost black, is endeavouring to crawl out. Lifting him up tenderly they take him into one of the Pullman cars, all of which have remained on the track, and making up a berth he is made as

comfortable as possible until the arrival of a doctor. In a few minutes the fireman is found and brought in and laid beside the engineer; he, too, being terribly burned and internally injured.

In a little while the engineer opened his eyes, and, seeing his companions leaning over him, each of them in tears, he slipped his left hand, burned as it was, into his vest-pocket and withdrawing his watch put it in his right hand, and then, bringing his pocketbook from his trousers pocket, placed that also with the watch in his right hand, and handing them both to one of the railroad men, he said:

"Here, Mose, give those to my wife; I don't think we will pull through this."

And then, looking at his companion with entreaty in his voice, as well as in his eye, he continued:

"Mose, pray for us."

With tears streaming down his face, Mose answered:

"Morris, I ain't a Christian, I can't pray."

"Oh," he begged, "get some one to come here and pray for us."

Going through that entire train of Pullman cars, they could find no one who would volunteer to pray with that dying engineer and fireman, every passenger on the train apparently as unprepared to die as he, who all through his life had rejected the religion of Jesus Christ which alone could give him comfort and hope in such

an hour. Not until their removal to a hospital at Paterson did they find any one to pray for them. There a priest was found who kindly offered prayer in their behalf; and ere morning they both passed away.

It became my sad duty as Chaplain of our Division to read the burial service of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers at the grave of the engineer.

Calling upon his widow some weeks later, a woman who had long hoped and prayed for the conversion of her husband, when she saw me, she exclaimed:

"Oh, Brother Keenan, can you give me any hope that my husband is saved?"

I comforted her as best I could, referring to the goodness and mercy of God to those who call upon Him even at the last. That there was little assurance in what I or any one else said was evident some months later when, under the sorrow of his death and the thought of an eternal separation, her mind gave away and it was necessary to place her in an institution, where she continually mourned her husband as being lost.

Much of the sadness and sorrow of this incident might have been eliminated had that husband yielded to the better impulse of his nature when in the strength and vigour of life, rather than to have put it off until it was apparently too late.

Like my friend, the lawyer, the charm of a

worldly and indifferent life held him in its grasp, almost to the last, when it was evident his better nature told him there was something more to live for than the present.

XIV

DOWN IN TEXAS

Held up—Holding the Fort in a Meeting-House—An Enjoyable Hunting Experience—A Second Visit to Texas Reveals Improved Conditions Among Railroad Men—One Scholar ; Five Teachers.

ON a very pressing invitation from my friend, Jim Wright, then holding the title of engine-house foreman—there really was no engine-house—for the Texas-Pacific road at Texarkana, Texas, in 1881, I decided in company with Mr. W. S. Cannon, a business man of Newark, New Jersey, and the champion one arm wing shot of the world, to spend a couple of weeks hunting in Texas.

With guns and other hunting equipment, we left Newark and reached St. Louis by way of Chicago without special incident. After riding all night on the Iron Mountain Road out of St. Louis, when we reached Little Rock, Arkansas, I concluded that I would ride on the engine for a change; the rigid rule forbidding any one to ride on the engine unless duly authorized by the officials not being then in force.

The train had already started when I put my foot on the step and climbed on to the deck of

the engine. As I did so, I noticed a quick movement on the part of the engineer, and of the fireman likewise, and ere I realized it two guns were pointed directly at me.

"Don't shoot!" I shouted. "I am a Brotherhood man."

"Prove it to me, quick!" the engineer demanded.

I gave him the password, and immediately the guns were dropped. Extending his right hand to me, he said, as he invited me into the cab:

"Sit down and make yourself at home."

For a few moments I was completely unnerved and seemed to have lost my breath. I hardly knew whether I was sitting or standing as the engine went speeding over the rails.

When I had recovered myself sufficiently to speak, I said to the engineer:

"Why do you carry those guns?"

"If you had not given me the password you would have found out. By this time your carcass would have been lying somewhere back yonder beside the track," he replied.

I never felt more gratified at having the password; it had evidently saved my life. The guns were kept on the engine to use on train robbers, so numerous at that time.

When we reached Texarkana, we found that Jim Wright had formed a committee to receive us and arrange for our hunting expedition, and we were given a royal welcome. I have already

told of the conditions that prevailed in California when I railroaded on the Sierra Nevada mountain in 1868 ; but in Texarkana at this time, the condition of railroad men, and of public sentiment generally, was worse than I had ever seen.

Here in the streets of Texarkana I saw men and women prisoners, black and white, with long hoes, at work repairing the streets, while guards, with Winchester rifles, stood about them, ready to shoot them down if they attempted to run away. As I stood looking at them a friend of one of the prisoners stepped up to him and handed him a bottle of rum, out of which he drank copiously, while the guard stood by, but said nothing.

Three locomotives stood on the track ready and waiting to go out, and out of seven engineers there was not one who was fit for duty. The Brotherhoods and Young Men's Christian Associations had not yet been organized in this section of the country, and there was the evidence of the need of these helpful agencies. What a marked contrast I found in visiting Texarkana twenty years later, after the introduction of these organizations !

It was Saturday when we arrived, and on Sunday morning I started out to find a church. There was no Sunday here apparently ; everything was wide open,—gambling, drinking and business in general going on as usual.

When I reached the top of the hill, I saw a

building with a low steeple, on top of which was a weather-vane in the shape of a large fish. "This must be a church," I thought; but could not understand why it should have a fish as its emblem.

As I stood looking and ruminating, a man stepped out and stood in the doorway. As he did so, I said: "For what is this building used?"

"Why it's a church," he answered, condescendingly, as though surprised at my ignorance.

"Well," I said, "I am a railroad man and God has converted my soul. Do you think there would be a chance for me to tell about it?"

"Certainly," he said. "Come up here at three o'clock and you will have all the chance you need."

Going down to the engine headquarters, which was nothing more than an oil room, I told Jim Wright about the arrangements I had made, and how I was going to have an opportunity of telling what the Lord had done for me; and invited him to accompany me.

While Jim had joined the Eighth Avenue Church in Newark the same day that I did, the demoralizing conditions which surrounded him at Texarkana had dampened his zeal; but he consented to accompany me if I would not call on him to pray. He offered to help in the singing, however.

We then went around among the railroad men and invited them to the meeting, with the result that, when we reached the church at three o'clock, it was pretty well filled with an audience that must have shocked the regular worshippers. The majority of them wore no coats, many were in greasy overalls and their faces and hands indicated that soap and water must have been either scarce or offensive.

It happened to be a Methodist church in which at this time a number of pastors were holding a conference ; but I knew nothing about it. Before the "brethren" arrived, however, Jim Wright and I had opened the meeting ; Jim leading the singing as he used to do in the good old Praying Band days. As the ministerial gentlemen came in one by one, I noticed that they eyed us rather sharply, evidently at a loss to know why two such characters as Jim and I should be holding the fort.

I called upon them to offer prayer, but not one responded ; so, by praying myself, I led them to see that it was out of courtesy, rather than necessity, I offered them the privilege. At one time during the progress of the meeting it looked as though we would lose the fort, their attitude became so threatening ; but I continued speaking with all the earnestness of my soul, with the result that tears began to flow down the cheeks of the dark faces of the railroad men. When I gave the invitation for those who

wished to be prayed for to come forward, quite a number did so and got upon their knees. Again I called upon the ministerial brethren to pray, but as heretofore there was no response. Whether it was because they had never seen a railroad meeting, or because I was from the north, I never found out. Fortunately, I knew nothing at that time about the division of the Methodist Church, North and South.

Jim Wright prayed, however, and that did me more good than if all the preachers had done so. He warmed up wonderfully, and many of the railroad men who attended the meeting were greatly blessed.

The large-heartedness of railroad men in general was manifest in the arrangements the committee made for our entertainment. Among them I found Dewitt Marean, one of the seven engineers who so unceremoniously went to California in 1868. We spent Monday shooting quail a few miles out on the Iron Mountain Road. The quail were so numerous that in a few hours we had all we could carry, and on reaching Texarkana had difficulty in getting anybody to accept them, even as a gift.

On Tuesday a special Pullman car was provided for our use to take us to Marshall, to hunt deer, the committee escorting us to the train and providing everything necessary for the trip, even insisting that the pointer dog which Mr. Cannon had bought should also ride in the Pullman car.

At Marshall we were to have been met by a man who would take charge of us, but he did not put in an appearance. The country here is thickly timbered and very wild. It is perfectly level; there are no stones on the ground and a horse can be driven through it anywhere.

Getting off the train, we saw nothing but a little log cabin, in which were a mother and three children. There was no clay between the logs, there were no windows, and the floor was simply the earth. Not another house for miles; no church; no school; they were indeed children of the forest. Their society seemed to consist of foxes, squirrels, wild hogs, wild turkeys and wolves, of which there were abundance.

Mr. Cannon had hardly stepped twenty feet from the track when bang, went his gun.

"What have you got?" I asked.

"A fox-squirrel," he answered. It was the first one I had ever seen.

We were not far from the Indian Territory and were fearful of getting lost by getting too far from the railroad. Soon Mr. Cannon found a bevy of quail into which we both banged, making quite a racket with our guns. All at once I noticed a man on horseback stooping and looking for those who were shooting. Locating us, he turned his horse and came directly towards us. As he approached, I saw that he was sitting on a Mexican saddle; he wore a Mexican hat, had long hair, and carried a Winchester rifle. He

headed straight towards me, and, being a little fearful, I kept my gun cocked. When he reached me, he swung gracefully from his horse and putting out his hand, said :

“ How dee ? ”

I did not know what he meant, but Mr. Cannon, who had lost his arm in the war, was familiar with the Southern accent and expressions and stepping up responded, by saying :

“ How dee ? ”

“ I heared them ar guns,” he said, “ and I knew them ar guns was not like my gun.”

He became quite friendly, told us that his name was Buck Brocke and insisted that we come and visit his home. “ Where can his home be in this wilderness ? ” I thought. He insisted that I get on the horse, while Mr. Cannon and he walked ahead. We went about three miles, when we came to a clearing in which was a house—a log cabin—raised two feet from the ground, and containing two rooms. Around the house and cattle yard was a very high fence, to prevent the wolves from getting in and killing the calves and young stock.

When I reached the stockade, I was met by an old man, Buck's father, who, looking at me sharply, said :

“ How dee ? ”

I now knew that it was a friendly greeting, so I answered :

“ How dee ? ”

Taking the bridle and throwing it over a post, he invited me over the fence. The old man was about sixty-eight years old. When we had gotten over the fence, a woman about thirty years old, six feet tall and straight as a gun-barrel, came out of the house, whom he introduced as his wife; winking at me during the introduction. This I thought rather strange, but learned afterwards that this was caused by the nerves of one of his eyes having given out.

The old man kept watching me very intently; I presume that I did not impress him favourably. We had some quail and fox-squirrel which we asked the old man's wife to cook for us. In the meantime I asked if they had any milk, and Buck said he would get us some. They themselves used neither milk nor butter, allowing the calves to run with the cows. In order to get us some milk it was necessary to tie up one of the bull calves, so that the cow might have an opportunity to furnish us some milk.

When the game was cooked, we went into the house to eat. There were no chairs to sit on, nothing but boxes and one bench. No tablecloth, no butter, coffee made out of some sort of grain, corn cake and plenty of wild-hog bacon. This is the chief diet in that country. The game had been cooked, but what cooking! Imagine a hungry broker and a railroad engineer, who were used to good home cooking, sitting down to this repast!

As we were all seated, the old man opposite me, still watching me and winking, I said to him :

" My old friend, may I ask a blessing? "

" What! Ask grace? " he replied.

" Yes," I answered.

He bowed his head, almost into his plate, while I asked for God's blessing on the food. When he looked up again I saw that I had won him and he no longer looked on me with suspicion.

Many years before he had come from Tennessee and knew what it was to " Ask grace," and had not yet forgotten. That evening Buck said that he would go out and get us a young buck deer. So taking Mr. Cannon's gun and rigging a small lamp, on which was a reflector, on his cap, and getting on the horse, he started off. This is what they call hunting " shinee eye." Going out into the forest, the deer are attracted by the light, and will stand perfectly still until the hunter comes so near that their bright eyes can be seen. Buck had been gone but a little while when we heard the gun fired—it sounded like a cannon—and a few minutes later he rode up to the door with a young buck. It was an easy matter to go out and shoot four or six deer without getting off the horse. They were afraid to let us shoot at night, however, lest we might kill the cattle. It was necessary to know how to distinguish the " shinee eye."

I don't know that I ever spent a more en-

joyable evening, as we sat until 'way into the night telling these humble children of the forest about the great developments in the cities, trolley-cars, elevated roads, electric lights, high buildings, steamboats and various things. They would have sat and listened all night. When it came time to retire, and I suggested having prayer, they got upon their knees reverently. There was not a book of any kind, not even a Bible, in the house. No printed matter of any sort, except a portion of an old *Police Gazette*. They were as tender-hearted and responsive to the gospel, however, as any people I have ever seen.

We remained there for several days, hunting, Mr. Cannon mounted on a big mule, the bridle in his mouth most of the time, as he needed his only hand to hold the gun, and I on an Indian pony. We were an interesting looking pair. There were plenty of deer, but somehow I could not shoot them. My pony was very small, and then I was not used to shooting on horseback.

"What's the matter with you, Keenan? Didn't you see that deer right in front of you?" Mr. Cannon shouted at me several times. I saw them, but before I got ready to shoot, they were hiding behind some tree or had disappeared. But we enjoyed ourselves immensely. Two or three times I ran into a wild sow with a litter of young pigs, and I thought I would have to shoot her to get rid of her.

Some friends from the Indian reservation came over to visit our hosts, and when the time came for us to depart they stood around to say good-bye. Mr. Cannon called my attention to the old man who stood at the corner of the house weeping, and said :

“What do you suppose he is crying for?”

“I’m sure I don’t know,” I replied.

“Why, he wants you to pray with him once more before you go.”

Calling the old man and all the friends into the house we had a farewell prayermeeting, each of them getting on their knees. When we arose to our feet, they were all in tears. It was touching to see those simple honest souls so deeply affected.

On our return to Texarkana, Jim Wright informed me that a brakeman was dying in the hotel. His leg had been caught and badly crushed while coupling cars, and through lack of proper care gangrene had developed. Going upstairs quietly, and entering the room where he lay on the bed, I found he was uttering the most terrible oaths.

“My son, don’t swear so,” I said, as I laid my hand upon his fevered brow. The sound of my voice roused him, and as he looked up in my face, I said :

“Where are you from?”

“Tennessee, sir,” he answered.

“Have you any parents?”

"Yes, sir ; a mother."

I undertook to try and comfort him ; but in his severe pain he again lapsed into unconsciousness and that night he died.

He was buried by the town, there being no Brotherhood or Young Men's Christian Association to pay a last tribute to his memory ; and I understood that his poor mother never knew what had become of her boy.

The committee had arranged for us to go to Fort Worth for a prairie chicken hunt. Again we were put into a Pullman car and given a good send-off by the boys, a goodly number of whom were at the station.

After riding all night I thought that a ride on the engine would be a change. Approaching the engine more cautiously this time, remembering the guns that were pointed at me on the trip down, I found the engineer, Jack Cannell, to be an old friend whom I had known in the east. On informing him that we were going to Fort Worth on a prairie chicken hunt, he stated that he had a ranch a few miles out of Fort Worth, and insisted that we go there. He said that he would stop the train and let us off when he reached the ranch, and gave us instructions to the man in charge, so that he would arrange for our entertainment.

About noon the train stopped on the prairie, and getting off, we soon found the ranch, and, making ourselves and our object known, the

ranchman set to work at once to make our stay a pleasant one.

This man prided himself as being a good shot, but when he saw Mr. Cannon, with but one arm, shoot "all around" him, he could not understand it and admitted he was beaten. There were plenty of birds and we enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. I tried shooting birds on horseback, and thought of Buffalo Bill; but did not succeed very well.

As evening came on, our friend, the ranchman, took us to the hotel, which was little more than a shanty. When we came to dinner, there were no chairs, no table-cloth, the only seats being two long benches one on each side of the table. The proprietress had cooked our birds; but what cooking! She also waited on us, her mouth full of "bunder," a kind of snuff the juice from which was running in streams down her chin. I saw that Mr. Cannon did not enjoy our game.

We stayed on the ranch several days, when we again returned to Texarkana and, taking farewell of the railroad boys, started for home. I shall ever remember it as the greatest hunting trip of my life.

In 1901 I had the pleasure of visiting Texas again. After my interesting experience at Indianapolis with the infidel who wanted to know where Cain got his wife, I continued on an evangelistic trip under the direction of the International Committee of the Young Men's Chris-

tian Association, and spent a couple of months with the Railroad Branches, organized within a few years, in Texas.

It seemed hardly credible that such a transformation in the lives of railroad men could have been effected in the twenty years since I had been here. Not only had a magnificent building been erected here at Texarkana for the Railroad Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, but similar buildings had been erected at Big Springs, Childress, Cleburne (from which a male chorus of twenty-five Christian railroad men went to Topeka, Kansas, in May, 1903, to participate in the International Railroad Conference), Denison, Hillsboro, Palestine, San Antonio, Smithville and Temple.

Mark the contrast! In 1881 out of seven engineers there was not one fit for duty; here were buildings teaming with railroad men, sober and in their right minds, where, at a moment's notice, a half dozen train crews might be found ready and waiting for orders. Scores of these men were interested in Bible study and hundreds attended the religious meetings conducted during my stay.

While at Cleburne, I received word that an engineer at Fort Worth wished to see me, without fail, ere I returned home. On arriving at Fort Worth, I hunted for him and as I came to his engine, he looked down at me and said:

"Hello, Mr. Keenan!"

"Hello," I answered, looking at him inquiringly. "Your face looks familiar but I can't place you."

Stepping off the engine, he shook hands with me heartily and said :

"Do you remember the boy who taught you the Sunday-school lesson in the Eighth Avenue Church in Newark years ago?"

"I certainly do," I answered.

"Well, I am that boy," he said.

The whole scene came before me in an instant. I remembered how, soon after my conversion, the Sunday-school superintendent, Charley Bolen, said to me one Sunday :

"Brother Keenan, I have a class of five boys I want you to teach."

I protested against taking a class of any kind because of my lack of knowledge of the Bible, but he insisted, and, placing a lesson paper in my hand took and introduced me to the boys. As soon as the superintendent had left us, I said :

"See here, boys, I don't know anything about the lesson or about the Bible, for that matter, but you do. Now, I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll be the scholar and you boys can teach me the lesson," and, placing the lesson paper in the hands of the brightest looking boy, I continued :
"Will you teach me?"

"Yes, sir," they answered in chorus, and for two Sundays that boy—the engineer whom I met

at Fort Worth—with the assistance of the other four, read and fully explained the lesson to me. I concluded that it would not be fair to the boys to continue in this way, so took up the matter of teaching them as best I could.

The engineer insisted that I spend Sunday with him at his home in Denison, which I did. The speaker of the railroad men's meeting having failed them, I was invited to speak in his stead, and, to my great delight, when the invitation was given for those who desired to become Christians to arise, my friend the engineer did so, and is now one of the "heroes" for God on the Santa Fé system.

XV

EUGENE'S MESSAGE

The Downward Steps in the Life of a Young Man—
Some Sad Experiences—A Death Bed Message.

OUR only boy—Eugene, was the joy and pride of his mother, sister and father.

He was yet but a lad when, looking up into my face—then a wicked, unhappy man—with tears streaming from his eyes, he had said :
“ I wish papa was a good man.”

As youth developed, so did his character. At family worship his voice mingled with ours. Sunday found him regularly at church and Sunday-school services. He took special pleasure in accompanying me to the meetings of the Railroad Men's Praying Band ; participating in the services by testimony and by song.

When he reached his twenty-first birthday, something occurred to show that the forces of evil were contending for the mastery of his life.

Passing through his bedroom one day, I noticed the odor of tobacco from his clothes which hung in his room. On investigation I found a partly burned cigarette in his coat pocket. When he came home that evening, I took him aside and asked him whether it was possible

that he had become a victim of the cigarette habit. He replied :

"Don't worry about me, father, I'll never go as far as you did."

"God forbid that you ever should, my boy," I answered, as I pleaded with him to retrace his first downward step. It was all to no purpose, however.

That evening Eugene knelt with us as usual. As his turn came to pray he was silent, and when I called on him, he burst into tears, and said :

"No, father ; I can't be a hypocrite ; I cannot pray to-night."

"No, my boy," I answered. "I don't want you to be a hypocrite ; but as I love you, let me plead with you not to turn away from God. If you have done anything to offend Him, seek His forgiveness now and be reconciled."

Again, my pleadings were useless. Our boy had taken the first step ; the second came as a natural sequence.

When I inquired for Eugene the next evening, —the first time he had been absent from family prayer,—his mother said that he was at a neighbour's house across the street. These neighbours were Christians, but in their home was a young man who loved to play cards. He taught Eugene how to play, and, lacking money or chips, they played with matches as stakes. In this way a fascination for gambling was created that proved to be the downfall of our loved and only boy.

The young men, into whose society this companion led him, usually congregated at a certain place where cigarettes and tobacco, advertised by gaudy pictures, were sold in the front part of the store. Separated from this department by a wooden partition was a pool-room,—but a step from one to the other,—and back of this was another room, with a door capable of being securely fastened and a small slide in its panel, which, needless to say, was used as a gambling den,—another step only being necessary to reach it from the pool-room. In a short time Eugene added each of these to the steps already taken.

The dance, the ball-room and the saloon followed in regular order, until the round was complete; and we found our boy completely fascinated by the excesses of a worldly life.

Later and later became his home-coming at night and deeper and still deeper became the sorrow of a mother's and a father's heart.

He no longer accompanied us to church or prayer meeting and only a mother or a father who has passed through the same experience can realize the anguish of soul through which his mother and I passed for nearly three years, as our boy kept drifting farther and farther from all that was pure and good. With a mother's and father's love, we clung to him, praying that in some way God might lead him to see the folly of his course. As we went to church with heavy hearts we could not sing; our joy having

given place to sorrow. When the pastor called on me to pray, the burden of my prayer would be that God would save my boy. The people grew tired of my pleadings on behalf of our son and showed little sympathy with us in our sorrow.

Gladly could we have laid him in his grave, pure and good as he was in his youth, rather than to think of him as being in some hell-trap of the devil, a few blocks from where we were praying in the house of God.

The pastor gave up hope of our boy being saved. Indeed, he so expressed himself on one occasion when his statement brought Eugene's mother to her feet to declare that she had faith to believe that God would yet save her boy. A mother's love,—who can measure its depth?

During this time my run on the road brought me home several nights in the week about midnight. Coming in quietly, I would go up-stairs and putting my hand on the bed, find it unoccupied. Going to the bay window in the front room, I would find that mother waiting and watching for the home-coming of her boy.

"Come, Mira, come to bed," I would plead. "You will catch cold sitting there."

"No, Tom, I cannot go to bed until my boy comes," would be her reply.

Tired out with the duties of the day I would retire and soon fall asleep. Two or three hours later, perhaps, I would be awakened by an arm placed affectionately around my neck, and —

"Tom, won't you go and get my boy?"

"Oh, Mira," I would answer, "what's the use?"

By that time a hot tear would fall upon my face. I could not resist the pleading of that mother's tear, and dressing myself would start out at two, three or four o'clock in the morning to find our boy; sometimes at one place, sometimes at another, but usually at the gambling den described above.

Passing through the smoking and pool-rooms, I would come to the door of the gambling den and, knocking loudly, demand admittance. When the door was not opened promptly, knowing who it was, a threat to burst it in would usually cause it to be opened. Looking into that room, I have seen from twenty-five to thirty young men, some of them sons of our own church members,—some the sons of deacons and elders in other churches, and of leading men of the city engaged in gambling.

"Come, Eugene; mother is waiting for you."

He always came with me, willingly, and mother would always greet him fondly when he returned. How he or any young man could to this extent go contrary to a mother's love is almost inconceivable.

Such dissipation, night after night, was more than his physique could stand and he became affected with a nasty cough. The doctor pronounced it bronchitis, which with proper care,

might soon be cured. The tide of worldly pleasure, now at its flood, was bearing him on too rapidly to admit of his taking proper care of himself, and in a short time consumption developed.

We resorted to every possible means to prevent him from throwing his life away ; but not even the ravages of consumption could break the fascination of the life to which he had committed himself.

I remember that, on my way home one afternoon, I learned he was to lead the grand march in a ball that evening. Knowing that he was not physically strong, and ready to devise any means to keep him at home, so as to save his waning forces, I plead with his mother not to give him a white shirt.

Overhearing our conversation, he charged me with endeavouring to persuade his mother against him, and, to my astonishment it looked for a moment as though he would strike me. I was tempted to resist him—how thankful I am that I did not do so—and turning around I walked out of the house and for three hours passed through one of the severest conflicts of my life.

Everything seemed to be against me, and the devil kept saying to me: "You have three dollars, why not go and get drunk and drown your sorrow?"

For some time I stood with my arms around

a lamp-post, fearing to move from the spot lest I should yield to the temptation. Some demon seemed to possess me, but my safety seemed to lie in holding on to the lamp-post, and when I let go it was to go home.

His health continued to fail, so that in hope of restoring it and in order to get him away from his companions, I decided to take him to California. He was willing to go, and, for the purpose of accompanying him I secured a two months' leave of absence from the railroad company.

My old friend and companion, Jim Wright, was then engineer on the Wabash Railroad at Chicago. On writing him to ask whether he would accompany us, his answer was :

" Yes, wire me when you leave New York." Always a true friend indeed, when called upon in any emergency.

At Chicago, Eugene located some gambling places, and lost his self-control to the extent that we began to despair of getting him away. Had it not been for Jim Wright, who had great influence with him, I doubt whether we would have gotten further than that city.

At St. Louis we had a similar experience, but ultimately we arrived at San Francisco.

Here we called upon the general manager of the Southern Pacific Railroad, whom I knew personally ; he had formerly been with the Morris and Essex road. He gave us passes to Los

Angeles and a letter which secured Eugene a position as trainman on a passenger train. The climatic conditions at Los Angeles were not suited to him, however ; so he was transferred to Tucson, Arizona.

My leave of absence had now almost expired, and, after exacting and receiving his promise to do better, I reluctantly left him to return home, trusting that God would give him strength to resist the temptations which, in that country, and at that time, were so great. I had acquainted the members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers at Los Angeles and at Tucson of his condition. They promised to care for him, after my return, and in many ways made that promise good. When his health failed, so that he could no longer work, they had him placed in a hospital, and notified me of his condition.

Through all this experience it had been his mother's prayer that he might be spared to return home once more.

When I learned that he was in a hospital, I wired Jim Wright, who was then running on the Texas Pacific road at Fort Worth, asking him to go to Tucson, get our boy and send him home. Jim did so.

It was while lying in the hospital at Tucson, not expecting that he would again look into the faces of those dear to him, he penned the following lines on the fly-leaf of a book which he was reading :

When I am dead

I would not have the rude and gaping crowd
Around me gather ; and, 'mid lamentation loud,
Tell of my virtues ; and with vain regret,
Bemoan my loss, and, leaving me, forget.
But I would have the few of kindly heart,
Who, when misfortune came, so nobly did their part ;
And oft, by thoughtful deeds their love express ;
These would I have, no more, no less,

When I am dead.

When I am dead,

I would not have the high and storied stone
Placed o'er my grave, and then be left alone ;
But I would have some things I once did love,
Ere I did leave the joyous world above,
Placed o'er me. And each succeeding year
I'd have my friends renew them, and oft linger near,
With loving thoughts upon the dear one laid below,
And talk of times departed long ago,

When I am dead.

Forgive !—oh, this I pray for more than all ;
The anguish I have caused, the deeds beyond recall.
Think kindly on me as I lie so still,
So poor a subject for an angered will ;
Think of some generous deed, some good word spoken,
Of heart bound up I found all sad and broken ;
Think gently when this last long rest is mine,
And gaze upon my form with looks benign,

When I am dead.

When Jim reached Tucson, Eugene was surprised to see him, and, on learning that he had come to take him home, he said :

“ No, I don't want to go home. I don't want to see my mother and father and Maggie again. I have disgraced them all, and as I have not long

to live it is better that I die and be buried here."

He was quite feeble and could only get about with the assistance of a cane. Jim stayed with him several days and finally secured his consent to return home. Stopping off at Fort Worth, so that he might rest for a couple of days, Jim then put him on the train for home, where he arrived very weak, but in answer to a mother's prayer, and was received with great joy by each of us.

Still there was no sign of repentance and everything looked very dark. After his return, his infatuation for gambling continued and with the aid of a crutch and cane he would hobble down to the old haunts. Again I would go, at all hours of the night, to bring him home; sometimes so weak that it was necessary for me to put my strong arm about him to help him along.

The burden on my heart seemed more than I could bear. I began to think I should be obliged to quit my work, my mind was so engrossed and worried because of our boy. Was it possible that he would die without being reconciled to God? The thought almost distracted me; so that finally I ceased praying for him, asking God to relieve me of the burden. Not so his mother; she had always declared that God would save him.

Becoming so weak that he was obliged to take to his bed, we had the consolation at least of having him at home. Still everything looked

dark, though he seemed to be in a more thoughtful mood than heretofore.

One day while his mother was busy downstairs, she heard his feeble voice, calling :

“ Mother ! Mother ! ”

Hurrying up-stairs and entering his room, he said :

“ Mother, I want you to pray with me.” It was the first ray of light in the darkness of three years.

“ Most assuredly I will, my boy,” she replied, as she knelt at his bedside.

“ Just wait a moment, mother, I want to get on my knees with you once more,” as, with some effort, he arose from his bed and bent his poor wasted form by the side of his mother.

When she had finished praying, the voice that she had not heard in prayer for over three years was again lifted to God, asking forgiveness for the past and for a consciousness of being again restored to the favour of God, through His Son who died for sinners.

The next day, while reading the Bible, his eyes fell upon the passage :

“ Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee ; because he trusteth in Thee,” Isaiah 26 : 3, and with this promise came the sweet consciousness of his reconciliation to God.

When I returned home that evening, he greeted me as he had not done for three years,

his face lit up with happiness and joy, while my own joy knew no bounds.

It was his delight thereafter to have me sit and read to him from the Bible, of Jesus and of heaven, and then I spent with my boy the happiest six months of my life, all of which time he was confined to his bed.

His health continued to fail gradually, until, fearing the end was at hand, I laid off and remained at home.

While busy in the garden one day, mother called me, saying that Eugene wished to see me.

He was about to leave us now. He had taken his farewell of his Aunt Mary, who had always idolized him, and of Maggie.

Now comes mother,—she who had clung to him when all others had given him up. She was willing to part with him, now that her prayers and faith had been rewarded in the blessed hope he possessed of the future.

Taking my hand in his, and looking me calmly in the face, he said :

“ Father, you have been good to me. I know that I have caused mother and you many sad hours and have almost broken your hearts ; but, if there has been one good trait in my character, cherish it ; forget the rest, and let them be buried with me in the grave. I see it all now ; but it is too late. If I could live and have one more chance, I would endeavour to make mother and you and home happy.”

Still holding my hand, he continued :

" Father, I have one favour to ask of you, before I go."

" What is it, my boy ? "

" When I am dead and gone, as you go from place to place to address meetings, speak kindly to the young people. Ask them, for me, to shun evil company, the cigarette, the card-table, the club-room, the ball-room and the saloon."

I promised him that I would.

" Now, father, be faithful," he said. " I'll be there to meet you," and in a few moments he was gone.

CHAPTER XVI

MAGGIE

She Runs an Engine—With Maggie's Children—Buying "A Black Beauty?"—My Horse Dealing is not a Success—A Visit to the Deacon and the Story of the Black Horse—Maggie's Farewell.

THE apple of my eye,—a girl after my own heart—was my daughter Maggie. Her presence usually dispersed all my worry or anxiety; she was so bright and happy. From the time of my conversion, when she was but a girl, until she grew to womanhood, she would accompany me anywhere, knowing no fear. She has ridden with me on the engine hundreds of miles. She could run the engine and handle her too, with as much confidence and ease as myself, and delighted in running her just as fast.

She enjoyed accompanying me on hunting and fishing trips, when in the face of the greatest dangers, she was as fearless as a lion. I recall an instance when she and I were fishing, about half a mile off shore on Lake Hopatcong. A sudden storm came up that in a few minutes lashed the water into fury. I pulled towards the shore in the teeth of the wind, the waves breaking over the

bow and drenching both of us,—so that when we neared the shore the boat was half full of water,—and through it all she sat on the seat aft of me, trying to row, as unconcerned and cheery as though we were in a perfect calm.

She was devout as a Puritan ; perhaps this accounted for her fearlessness. The leader of the class meeting to which she belonged when she was yet a girl, took great pleasure in calling upon her regularly to open the meeting with prayer. She was a beautiful singer and for years led the singing in the infant class at the Sunday-school, where she was also organist.

As she grew to womanhood, another claimed her attention, and I saw that thereafter I must occupy a secondary place in her thought and affection. To this I could not object ; for had not I claimed Mira's attention in the same way ?

So when a very estimable young man, who enjoyed my utmost confidence and whom I have always held in the highest esteem, desired our consent that she become his bride, we gladly agreed to it, on condition that they make their home with us, which was cheerfully accepted.

We could not think of parting with Maggie. She was all we had, now that Eugene was gone. It was therefore a source of great joy to think that, although married, she would still be with us. We did not realize then how much this would mean to us as the years passed ; for the place that Maggie occupied in our hearts and life, was in a

few years to be taken up, as it now seems in even greater measure, by her children, Leah, Eugene and Crosby, each of whom came to our home as a bundle of affection around which we wound our heart-strings. And tied them too; tighter than a Gordian knot.

The neighbours declared that I was "crazy over those grandchildren." Call it craziness if you will! I never saw a grandfather yet that was otherwise. Those who have grandchildren don't talk like that. They know better. Those who haven't any will know better later—perhaps!

As for me, they were ever in my thought, on or off the engine. I was no more devoted to them than they were to me,—meeting me at the station on my return home, watching for and waving to me as the train on which I was running went flying past; romping with me on my off days until, tired out, one by one, they would fall asleep in my arms.

Sometimes, in the midst of their play I would drop on my knees at the bedside. As soon as I was missed, and they discovered me, I heard, "H—sh, grandpa's going to pray," and, cuddling close to me on their knees, my arms around them, I would lift my voice in prayer. It seemed that they enjoyed my praying, as much as my playing, with them.

I could not do too much for them. I indulged them in all kinds of toys and pets. Of the latter I think the goat "Billy" they enjoyed most. I

was happy in that which brought them the greatest pleasure.

"Oh! grandpa," Leah said to me one day. "I want you to enter 'Tom' in the poultry show at the County Fair. I'm sure he will win a prize," she pleaded.

"And I want you to put 'Dick' in, too," said Eugene, who came in just as Leah was pleading for "Tom."

We had some fancy Plymouth Rock poultry, in which the children took great pride; but the thought of entering them in the poultry show at the County Fair had not occurred to me.

"Tom" was a full-grown handsome rooster and "Dick" was a young one. The wishes of the children were to me always equal to a command and I at once made arrangements to have "Tom" with two hens, and "Dick" with two pullets, exhibited at the County Fair; each trio in a separate cage.

How delighted the children were at the thought of it! And they declared that each would surely win a prize.

The fair continued for three days, each of which they spent there watching and feeding their pets; coming home to tell us how the people admired them and what they said about *our* chicks. With them it was a foregone conclusion that they were prize-winners.

On the third day the prizes were to be awarded. It was my day off, and I was at the fair with the

children. How anxiously they watched the judges go here and there among the exhibits, putting a red ribbon, first prize, here and a blue ribbon, second prize, there! When the judges came to award prizes in the poultry exhibit, I could see that the children were exceedingly nervous, and when they put a red ribbon on "Tom's" cage, little Leah's eyes fairly sparkled with delight and her joy found no further expression than: "Oh! grandpa. First prize," as she clung to me and hugged me.

Eugene, however, was watching for "Dick's" fate, and, when the judges placed a blue ribbon on his cage, his joy was as great as Leah's. How happy they were in coming home! They could hardly contain themselves in their delight and could not reach home too quickly to tell their mother and their grandmother all about it.

We have the ribbons yet, sweet mementos of one of the happiest experiences I have ever had with Maggie's children.

Maggie's health began to fail, and, believing that the country air would be more beneficial to her, we moved to Mount Tabor, of camp-meeting fame. It was my desire to get a horse that she could drive, one that was kind and gentle. I was not a jockey and knew little about buying a horse, but the baggage-master on our train was in the business, and from him I learned that a wealthy man, a "deacon" in the Methodist Church, had a nice black horse for sale.

Afraid to go to some regular horse dealer or jockey, I thought this was my chance, and my friend, the baggage-master, thought likewise. Being acquainted with the Methodist man I went to see him. He had the horse harnessed and hitched to a wagon and we got in. He drove nicely, was fat and slick, a high header, looked good, and wasn't afraid of the cars. He warranted him good and true on all points.

"Now," said I, "put him to the lowest dollar."

He named the price and I said: "I'll take him."

"When will you take him?" he asked.

"Oh, in two or three days," I answered.

"I would rather that you take him now."

"All right," I said. In paying him for the horse, I felt well pleased at striking so good a bargain.

Going into the stall to look at him again, I noticed that the halter by which he was fastened was a very heavy one; attached to the halter was a heavy chain and on the end of the chain an unusually large weight. I also noticed that the sides of the stall were covered with heavy sheet iron. I looked at his eyes and they did not seem right; but then, I thought, I am buying him, not from a horse jockey, but from a "deacon" in the Methodist Church.

The next day, my daughter and her husband came for the horse and drove him to Tabor.

While he drove nicely, my daughter, for some reason, did not seem to like him.

Going out to the stable a day or two afterwards I found one of his fore shoes torn off, and the stall seemed to be unusually out of order. "I guess he's all right," I thought, "as I got him from a good Methodist." In a few days I found the other fore shoe torn off, and then I began to think it very strange.

About this time a horse dealer came along and said:

"Keenan, I've fallen in love with that black horse of yours."

"Is that so?" I replied.

Looking him over carefully he turned to me and said:

"Is he for sale?"

"Yes," I answered.

"What is he worth?"

"One hundred dollars."

He asked me whether he might drive him and I informed him that he could if he wished to.

Both of his fore shoes were off, but this man, being a blacksmith, said that he would put on the shoes if I could find him a few nails. I found the nails, he put on the shoes, hitched up, drove off and returned in about an hour.

When he got back, I said: "How do you like him?"

"All right! Keenan, I'll give you ninety-five dollars for the horse."

"He's yours," I said.

He counted out the money and paid me. I gave him the halter, chain and weight in the bargain; and a receipt for his money. I began to think I was a successful horse dealer, and had found a first-rate way of making money; but that did not end it.

About two weeks later who should jump on my engine at Morris Plains but my friend the blacksmith, and looking up into my face, said:

"I want to see you."

"How's the black horse?" I asked.

"That's just what I want to see you about," he answered.

"That's all right," I said, "you can't jockey me."

"I believe you're all right," he said, "but tomorrow afternoon I will meet you here with a horse and wagon and drive you over to my place."

He was at the station to meet me the next day, and drove me over to his place. Getting out of the wagon, we walked to the stable, and there in his stall stood the black horse, as meek as a lamb; but the manger was all torn out, the back part of the barn had been kicked away, and the stable looked as though a cyclone had struck it.

The blacksmith said: "Mr. Keenan, you can see for yourself."

"Yes," I said, "but will you please tell me what is the matter with the horse?"

"That horse has the blind staggers almost every night, and the man that sold him to you knew it, and played you a dirty trick," he replied.

I looked at the horse, then at the stable, and, as I did so, I began to think of the heavy halter, chain, and weight and the sheet iron, in the stall of the stable of the Methodist "deacon," and the fore shoes that were torn off in my own stable. Turning to the blacksmith, I said:

"I profess to be a Christian man, and don't want to have any connection with the horse-jockey business. I'll refund your money, but please do not say anything about it."

I don't think that he ever did, as I never heard from it again.

He sent the horse back to my stable the next day, and that night—I being away from home—the horse had the blind staggers so badly that my daughter and her husband were obliged to stay up all night with a big club to keep him from tearing our stable to pieces.

When I got home the following day, I found my family in a highly nervous state because of the black horse, and at once I sent word to my friend, the baggage-master, saying I wanted him to take the horse out of my stable. I did not care what he did with him, but I wanted the horse taken away from Tabor. He wired me to send him to Easton on the freight that night, which I did.

In a few days I received a dispatch saying a horse would be shipped to me that night on the freight. When the freight train arrived I went over to the station to get the horse. And what a sight that animal was! I could hang my hat on his hip-bones, and three teeth were broken off. The baggage-master had traded the black horse for this poor beast and I thought I was now worse off than before. I also came to the conclusion that my horse business was not a success. However, I fared better than I thought for.

Not caring to have him on exhibition, I led him over to the stable as quickly as possible. I was afraid if the neighbours gathered, to look at my new horse, they would enjoy a hearty laugh at my expense. I fed him pretty well and it was surprising to notice how quickly the flesh began to cover his bones. After prolonged efforts to get him in decent condition, I brought him out one day to see how he would act, and, to my surprise, he was so lively I could hardly hold him. He turned out to be quite a stepper and when I drove him with quarter-boots on, there was hardly anything on the road that could go by us. I enjoyed driving him, but if I took my daughter out for a drive on Sunday, he liked to go so well, that I did not dare put the boots on; for if I did, he knew *that* meant business, and I knew if some of my Methodist neighbours saw me speeding him, they would be apt to say:

"There goes old Tom Keenan, horse-racing on Sunday! Ain't he a pretty Christian!"

Some time afterwards I concluded that I would call and see my friend the rich Methodist "deacon." He was in his office when I called, and greeted me cordially.

"Sit down," I said, "I want to tell you a story."

I thought about Nathan telling David the story of the rich man taking the poor man's lamb; but I did not tell him that. I told him about a poor old man who was trying to live a Christian life. How that he was in need of a horse, but did not want to buy one from a horse-jockey; how he heard of a Methodist man who had a horse to sell, and, thinking this was his chance, bought the horse.

Noticing that he began to get a little uneasy and nervous, I said: "Just keep still 'til I tell you the whole story." So I went on and told him how this poor man took the horse to his home away up in the country. I told him about the heavy chain and halter; how the horse tore off his front shoes and racked the manger; how that finally the old man sold him, and that he made the purchaser's barn look as though a cyclone had struck it. When I got so far as to tell him about the horse having the blind staggers, he interrupted me by saying: "Hold on, Tom; that was the black horse I sold you."

"So it was," I said.

"Tom, did you lose anything on him?" he asked.

"Never mind that," I said, "that's all right. I just wanted to tell you the story of the black horse."

He was a hat manufacturer, and, turning to me, said :

"Tom, what size hat do you wear?"

"Seven and three-eighths," I answered.

He left the office for a minute, and when he returned brought a brand new hat, one of his best make, and putting it on my head, said :

"Tom, don't say anything about the horse ; but, whenever you need a new hat, drop in and see me."

I used to call on the "deacon" quite regularly after that, and always came away with a new hat, but as he has retired from business, I am obliged to buy my hats now.

Notwithstanding the unceasing care and devotion of her husband, her mother and myself, Maggie's health continued to fail. It became more and more evident that she, too, would soon leave us. So blessedly resigned was she that even the approach of death brought her no fear or dismay even when she had so much to live for in her husband and her children ; to say nothing of her mother and myself.

It may sound strange to say that no one ever clung to life with greater tenacity than did Maggie, or desired to live for her husband and her

children more than she did ; yet, all this being true, never was a soul more resigned to the will of God.

A more devoted mother never lived ! Her children were her life. She lived in them.

" Oh ! ma, I have so much to live for, but God seems to will it otherwise," she often said to her mother during the last few months. How blessedly she rested on the promises of God !

A little book of Promises was her daily companion, and so much comfort did she receive from these that she would frequently kiss the book.

At night, when everything was quiet, after the children had retired, she would say :

" Now, ma, we will have our prayer meeting."

She would ask for the passage of scripture she wished read, and then, lying on her bed where she had been for months, she would pray ; oh, how beautifully !

One Sunday afternoon she left us. It seemed as though there would never be a ray of sunlight in life for us again without her. While the rest of the family were at dinner that day, her mother, who was with her almost constantly, sat by her bedside. That frail slender form did not now look like our Maggie. Her mother could not refrain from weeping, although she always tried not to weep in Maggie's presence.

" Oh ! mammy," she said, " you must not

weep. I am perfectly happy. God's presence is so precious." Then in a few moments, she said :

" We'll have our prayer meeting now, ma," and closing her eyes, she prayed. She knew, but we didn't, that the end was near. That prayer, in what was her last " prayer meeting," embraced all her dear ones, husband, children, each of them by name,—how she plead with God for them—mother, father and many of her friends, naming each one.

After dinner we all gathered in her room as usual. She knew the hour was near ; one by one she bade us farewell. How she clung to her children ! Eugene especially, her great concern had been for him ; he was always the little mischievous one. As she yet talked with us, as rationally as any one in the room, she glanced upward. A heavenly smile lit up her face, as she said :

" Why, ma, I see Eugene."

That upward glance had pierced within the veil ; she caught a vision of celestial scenes and Maggie was no longer with us.

For her departure she had made every preparation even to the selection of the text for the sermon to be preached at her funeral, as well as other minor details, and last of all she requested that the following hymn, which so fully expressed her experience and resignation, be sung at the grave :

" My hope has found an anchor,
A sure abiding home,
Upon the Rock of Ages,
Where storms can never come.
And though I hear the tumult,
Of ocean's swell,
My soul is calm and peaceful,
'Tis well with me. 'Tis well !

REFRAIN :

" Oh, Thou ! whose blood has cleansed me,
My joy I cannot tell ;
But this my thankful heart can say,
'Tis well with me. 'Tis well !

" I bless Thy word that taught me,
My lost estate to see ;
And since the happy moment,
I gave my all to Thee,
The way I thought so dreary,
With light and beauty glows,
And all along its windings,
A cooling fountain flows.

" 'Tis well, where'er Thou leadest,
For Thou art with me still.
'Tis well whate'er Thou doest,
Because my Saviour's will.
And where my hope has anchored,
There faith and love shall dwell.
And whatsoever befall me,
I'll answer, Lord, 'tis well."

We could hardly realize that Maggie had left us ; but although she had gone, here was Leah, the picture of her mother, with us. And the boys, too,—Eugene and Crosby, romping and full of life as boys could be. Surely we had much

to be thankful for ; indeed, we would have had continued cause for gratitude could they have remained with us. But this was not to be.

Eighteen months later their father married again and the children were taken to their new home.

What sleepless nights, what tears, what yearning as though our hearts would break, Mira and I suffered following the separation from us of Maggie's children ! God knoweth.

For months after they were taken away, on my off days I would go to some convenient spot near the school where they attended, and, hiding behind a tree or corner of a building, I watched for them to come out, just that I might see them. While it was a joy to even look at them, I returned home only to weep again.

Six years have elapsed since the separation, but the yearning of heart for a place in the lives of Maggie's children is as keen as at the beginning. Time heals most wounds, but here is one that refuses to be healed.

Thank God for the assurance that some time, He " will wipe away all tears from their eyes ! "

XVII

HEROES

Living Versus Dead Heroes—Some Real Heroes—Bill Swick—Pete Hubbard—Johnny Lewis—Jerry George—Benny Locke—George Rouse.

ON entering the rooms of the Railroad Young Men's Christian Association at Hoboken one day, I was met by a representative of one of the New York papers. He had been informed I was one of the oldest engineers in the employ of the railroad company and thought I could recall some incidents in which railroad men had died at their post as heroes, which he desired to embody in a newspaper article on the subject.

Now railroad men in general have very decided opinions on the subject of "heroes" of this kind. They very well know that the man who dies at his post does so, either because he has no opportunity to escape or is fastened there by fright.

"I have known many men to be killed at their post in the performance of their duty," I replied, "but never knew one who would not have saved himself, if he could, or one who sacrificed his life

because he wanted to be a hero. For, let me tell you, life is precious to all of us."

"That's so," he answered, with an involuntary sigh.

"Would you like to see some heroes?" I asked.

"I would indeed," he answered, as visions of his prospective article again rose in his mind.

"Then come with me to the roundhouse, and I will show you as fine a body of heroes as a man ever looked upon. I will show you a number of men who are not ashamed to stand up and confess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and it takes a hero to do that in these days."

Had he accompanied me to the roundhouse I might have introduced him at that time to Bill Swick.

While many of my old associates would joke about my conversion, my heart went out to them, and I would take occasion as opportunity offered to speak with them about living the better life. Some were harder to approach than others; indeed, it seemed that the more I loved a man in the old life the more difficult it was for me to approach him. Bill Swick was one whom my heart yearned for in particular. He was an engineer, and for years we had been bosom companions. Summing up sufficient courage I went to his engine at Hoboken one day for the purpose of having a word with him. He sat in the

cab reading a morning paper. Climbing on the engine I stepped up close to where he was sitting and putting my arm around him, said :

“ Bill, do you know that I miss your companionship? I would like nothing better than to have you with me in this Christian life. Bill, do you ever give it an honest thought? ”

His eyes filled with tears as he answered : “ Yes, Tom I do give it *many* an honest thought. ”

“ God bless you, Bill, ” I said. “ I am glad to hear it. ” I shook his hand and left him. My heart was too full to say more and I knew that if I tried to speak with him further I would have blubbered right out before him.

Bill lived at Summit. On the following Saturday evening in company with a chum who was an infidel, he drove from Summit to Basking Ridge and stopped at a hotel. While his companion put the horse and wagon away, Bill went into the hotel parlour and sat down.

He was alone in the parlour ; but, after sitting there a while, a little child came toddling in and, coming over to where he sat, put its little hand on his knee and looking up into his face, said :

“ Do 'ou love Jesus ? ” Bill gazed at the little one a moment, too surprised to say one word, while the little one, expecting an answer, kept looking inquiringly into his face, and again asked : “ Do 'ou love Jesus ? ”

That question, and that sweet little voice, were

too much for the big heart of Bill to resist; he burst out crying, and, taking the little one tenderly in his big rough hands, lifted it up and kissed it. The good time he had planned for was spoiled in a minute by the visit of this little stranger, and soon afterwards with his companion he returned home to Summit, completely broken up. He slept but little that night, and next morning he decided to go to church. It was the first time he had darkened a church door in many a long day. He wept all through the service; and so noticeable were his actions that he was an object of interest to the entire congregation. The minister had finished his sermon and was about to announce the closing hymn, when Bill rising to his feet, said :

"Hold on! dominie; before you close this meetin', I'd like to come forward and join the church."

So saying he started towards the pulpit. The minister, who was not anticipating any such climax to the morning service, recovered from the astonishment Bill's interruption had caused and stepping down from the pulpit, met Bill at the altar. Here Bill fell upon his knees and weeping aloud, asked the minister to pray for him, which he did.

After prayer, the minister received him as a member of the church on the confession of his faith in Jesus, whom the little child the evening before had asked him if he loved.

Bill immediately identified himself with the Railroad Men's Praying Band and for four years lived a sweet, happy, Christian life. One day, about four years after his conversion, while his engine stood in almost the exact spot where she stood the morning I climbed up to ask him if he gave the subject of the Christian life an honest thought; and, sitting where he did when I spoke to him, he was just about to open the throttle, when, without a moment's warning, and for some unaccountable reason, his engine blew up, and, like Elijah of old, his spirit went up in a chariot of fire,—a hero for God who died at his post.

* * * * *

Visiting the Eighth Avenue Church in Newark, New Jersey, one notices at the left of the pulpit, a large memorial window bearing the inscription:

*"In Loving Memory
of
Peter Hubbard."*

Thought will naturally suggest that this window is a memorial to some philanthropist or benefactor of the city who had been a member of the church. But no, it is a memorial to the Christian character and faithfulness of an humble switchman, for such was Peter Hubbard.

Standing at the switch as the trains went flying by, tall of stature as he was, with his arm ex-

tended over his head, his finger would point heavenward, and although the noise of the train might drown his words, the engineers and trainmen knew that he was saying to them, "Look up."

"Pete" Hubbard was an uncut diamond. He was crude in speech and manner; but this did not mar the worth of his character, which was apparent to all with whom he came in contact.

It was interesting, as well as amusing, to hear him discuss certain Bible characters. Zaccheus was a favourite with him and no one ever tired of hearing him hold forth on Zaccheus.

No tribute to his character could speak more eloquently of his goodness than that so often expressed by my daughter Maggie, in these words:

"Pa, if I could only get into 'Pete' Hubbard's coat pocket, I am sure that I would get to heaven, for if anybody is going there, he is."

* * * * *

The lives of railroad men, like soldiers and sailors, are so transparent to their fellows that the least weakness in character is at once noticed, and when, among a body of railroad men one of their number is characterized by the expression, "he is true blue," it is perfectly safe to conclude that you can trust him with your watch, and his watch is the possession a railroad man cherishes most.

From the influences of a Christian home at Reading, Pa., Johnny Lewis came on the road as

a fireman in 1868. These and the kind entreaties of his mother and father, whom he visited every three months, kept him from entering into the sinful excesses which railroad men in general indulged in at that time. Whenever he visited home, his mother would urge him to become a Christian. He did not do so, but it was his firm intention, whenever he married, to establish a Christian home, like the one he had known as a boy.

He was very capable in handling an engine and soon, by demonstrating his fitness for promotion, was made an engineer. In 1873 he was given "the fast line," the fastest train on the road, where he remained for over twenty years. Incident to his promotion, Miss Elizabeth Righter of his native town became his wife, but after his marriage he failed to carry out his purpose of establishing a Christian home. Living at Hoboken, he had not been reached by the great revival at Port Morris in 1875, or by the meetings subsequent thereto; though he had been impressed by the great change in the lives of many railroad men.

About this time, a little babe, that had come as a beam of sunshine into their home, was taken from them again, leaving their hearts sad and lonesome. This caused them both to think more seriously about entering on a Christian life, as their thoughts reverted to that little one, of whom Jesus had said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Seeing that a new Methodist Church had been opened, Johnny mentioned the fact to his wife one Saturday evening and they both decided to attend service there the next day. Returning from the evening service, they sat in front of the open grate fire in their home for a while, and then Johnny, taking the poker and leaning over, proceeded to rake the fire. As he continued to rake and look at the fire, he delivered himself rather hesitatingly—and Adam like—as follows :

“Wife, I believe that you have it in your power to make me a good man, and some day, if I should get to be a real wicked man, you will be sorry that you did not help me to be good.”

He continued to rake the fire for a couple of minutes and as there was no response to his statement, he looked up at her and saw that she was weeping. He at once tried to comfort her, feeling sorry that he had said what he did, and assured her that he did not hold her responsible ; but as he wanted to become a Christian and did not know how, he thought that she could help him.

Every night that week as his train went flying through Port Morris, seeing the little church lit up, he thought that if he could only get to the meetings there, he would receive the help he needed.

They went to church again the following Sunday evening, and, just before the last verse of the last hymn, the preacher exhorted any who de-

sired to become Christians to remain standing, while the rest of the congregation sat down.

Johnny wanted to remain standing, but his knees immediately became so weak that he thought he could not do so. His hands were resting on the back of the seat in front of him, and, as the congregation began to sit down, the hand of his wife came upon his as it rested on the seat, and, holding it firmly, the touch and pressure of that dear wife's hand brought strength to his knees and when the congregation was seated, that husband and wife stood together, thus making known publicly their desire to become Christians. Hand in hand they went forward, and, kneeling in prayer gave themselves to God. Johnny had fulfilled his promise to establish a Christian home, and from that date to the present—as he is still on the foot-board—Johnny has been known among his fellows as being “true blue.”

The crossing of the Greenwood Lake Road, between Paterson and Boonton on the main line, is protected in both directions by a distant or cautionary signal. When this is set against a train approaching the crossing, the engineer must bring his train under control and be ready to stop at the home signal, as the signal nearest a point of danger is called. When the distant signal is clear, it is presumed that the home signal will be clear also, and the engineer applies steam to resume or keep up the speed of the train.

Coming east, it is down grade to the crossing ; and one Saturday afternoon as Johnny was bringing " the fast line " east, with the biggest engine on the road, finding the distant signal clear, he opened the throttle to increase the speed, when, as he approached the home signal, he found it set against him. The home signal being set against a train, it automatically opens a derail switch, which causes the train to go off the track and on to the ground. This is a precautionary measure to prevent such a train from colliding with another on the crossing.

Seeing that the home signal was against him, Johnny shut off the steam, reversed, and applied the air brake ; but it was too late ; there was not space enough in which to stop on the down grade and the engine, running into the switch, and on to the ties, bumped along a little way and veering a little to the right, rested against a telegraph pole which stood by the side of the track. The jar of resting against the telegraph pole, caused Johnny to lose his balance and, falling through the cab window, he rolled down the embankment and into the bushes, fifteen feet below. Somewhat stunned at first, as he lay there, it seemed for a few moments as though the great engine would roll over on him ; but the telegraph pole and an overruling God kept it from doing so.

As he related the thrilling experience at the railroad men's meeting in the Association rooms at Hoboken, the next day, his face and hands

scratched from contact with the embankment and the bushes, he said : " Boys, it looked for a moment as though she would roll over upon me and crush me to death ; and, if she had, it was all right."

* * * * *

A prominent citizen of Boonton, New Jersey, who frequently attended late dinners in the city, had permission from the superintendent to ride in the caboose of the freight train which left Hoboken about midnight ; the last passenger train by the way of Boonton leaving at 9:15.

One Saturday night, being detained later than usual, it was after midnight when he reached the caboose and was a little surprised to find that the boys were not engaged in the usual game of checkers, or enjoying themselves as they generally did until the train was ready to leave. There seemed to be a solemn quiet in the caboose, which impressed him to such an extent that he asked one of the brakemen what it meant.

The brakeman replied : " Well, you see it is now Sunday morning, and while we cannot reach home in time to observe the Sabbath, we try to observe it as best we can on the train."

The remark of the brakeman led this man—who in the indulgences of the evening had given no thought to the approach of Sunday—to a course of serious reflection as he sat in the corner of the caboose during the slow journey of the freight train towards his home.

A long blast of the whistle indicated their approach to Boonton, where they would slow up to let him off, and the brakeman, taking his lantern from its place, stepped out on the platform of the caboose and down to the lower step, the passenger following. As they stood together on the lower step for a few moments, the lantern suspended from the brakeman's hand, so that the other might see where to alight, the brakeman said: "Just as I am lighting the way so that you may drop off in safety, so the Lord Jesus is lighting your pathway through life. Good-night." The man stepped off and in a moment was out of sight in the darkness, as, in answer to the signal of the brakeman, the train continued on its journey.

These few words of the brakeman, coming as a climax to the serious thought in which the man had been engaged in the corner of the caboose, so troubled him that he found no rest, until some time during the day he came to the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Afterwards he became a Sunday-school superintendent and an active Christian worker in his home town.

That brakeman is now a conductor on a passenger train, and few railroad men are more highly esteemed among their fellows or by the passengers on their trains than is Jerry George, conductor on the Dover Express. For many years he has continued to shed light on the path-

way of righteousness so that his fellow railroad men may be attracted by its brightness, and is one of the most active workers in the Railroad Department of the Young Men's Association at Hoboken of which he has the honour to be the treasurer. During the past few years, Benny Locke, Jerry George and Tom Keenan have been so closely associated in holding gospel meetings for railroad men that they have become known as The Gospel Trio of the Lackawanna.

* * * * *

"I hope you will find her much better this evening," a wife is saying to her husband as he bids her an affectionate farewell, while the children draw near to receive that parting kiss from papa which they have always received since infancy.

With tender messages from the children to "her," who it is evident occupies a warm place in the heart of each member of this family, the father takes his departure from the home—a neat little cottage in the town of Montclair, New Jersey. It is about 6:30 in the evening, in the late fall, and as he leaves his home, his daughters continue to wave him an adieu from the piazza, until he disappears in the darkness.

Stepping on board a train just as it pulls out of Montclair station, in a little while he alights at "the tunnel" as the west end of the Lackawanna tunnel is called, where all trains are required to

stop because of the crossing of another railroad at this point.

Climbing the hill to Jersey City Heights, he enters a little cottage. From the window a little later a sweet manly voice may be heard singing :

"Amen; Amen, my soul replies,
I'm bound to meet you in the skies,
And claim a mansion there,
And claim a mansion there."

"Mother, you don't seem to be so well, to-night. Before I go I think I will sing that verse you and I have so often sang together. You will try and sing it with me once more, won't you?"

"I'll try to, my boy, but I'm afraid my voice is rather weak for singing now."

With feeble voice she joins him and together they sing :

"You have my heart and here's my hand,
To meet me in the better land,
Where we shall part no more,
Where we shall part no more."

"Mother, you know that you have my heart and here's my hand to meet you in a better land, where we shall part no more," and he seals the promise with a kiss.

"May God watch over and protect you, my boy, to-night," she answers and he leaves her, not knowing whether he shall again receive that fond mother's blessing.

For twenty years past, on a certain afternoon,

he might have been seen following that path to the same cottage, allowing nothing to interfere with the visit to mother, who always expected him on what he called "Mother's afternoon."

But now for several weeks, in which mother has been sick, he could be found at her bedside every evening.

Retracing his steps down the hill to "the tunnel" he swings gracefully on to the rear platform of a passing train, and soon after the train is lost sight of in the darkness of the tunnel. As it emerges from the other end and slowly glides around the curve at the roundhouse, he drops off and disappears down the embankment.

An hour later, as the ponderous engine backs down to the station, which is to haul the nine o'clock Buffalo express, in the cab of the engine, with his hand upon the throttle, may be seen the stalwart form of Benny Locke, the engineer; a man whose breath has never been tainted with the foul fumes of a cigarette, whose tongue has never been heard to utter an oath, whose lips have never sipped of the intoxicating cup, whose life throughout had been pure, noble and good, because in his boyhood, through the sweet influence of that mother whom he has just left and to whom he is so devoted, he was led to heed the words of wisdom, "remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh in which thou

shalt say, I have no pleasure in them " and gave himself to God.

He is a man whose voice in gospel song has softened many hard hearts in the meetings which we assisted in conducting in churches or other places on the line of the road, between Hoboken and Buffalo, as we have gone forth in response to invitations from pastors or secretaries, or have been sent to assist in such meetings by the officials or the railroad company, a man whose tender pleas to the unconverted have moved vast audiences to tears and, in response to whose invitation to turn from sin, scores who have attended the meetings have come forward and bending the knee entered into a new life by a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus.

It was in 1872, being but fourteen years of age, that Benny came on the road as wood passer on engine number 90, of which Ed King was engineer. Later Benny was made fireman on the same engine, remaining with Ed King until 1880, when he was promoted to engineer. In Ed King he found a spiritual father, who gave him every help and encouragement in his endeavour to live a Christian life, in the midst of adverse conditions. Although he has spent thirty-two years on the deck and foot-board of a locomotive, he is still little more than a young man.

One Monday afternoon, as I brought the Easton mail to a stop in the station at Hoboken,

Benny stood upon the platform and looking up into my face as I greeted him from the cab window with: "Hello, Benny," he said: "Tom, what's the matter?" and turning away, walked down the platform weeping as though his heart would break. I called after him but he would not return.

Taking the engine to the roundhouse I met one of the engineers in whose way I purposely put myself to ascertain if anything unusual had been transpiring.

"Well, Tom, I'm mighty sorry to hear it," this man said to me, with anything but sympathy in his voice.

"Sorry to hear what?" I asked.

"Sorry to hear that you got drunk and were arrested by a policeman in Newark, on Sunday."

Thank God it was not true! though many even among my brother engineers would have been glad if it were. Not so with Benny Locke; it would almost have broken his heart had any such misfortune overtaken me.

Some poor fellow in Newark, on being arrested for intoxication, had given his name as "Tom Keenan"—just as I had given that of "John Clouse" under similar circumstances many years before in New York,—while the real Tom Keenan was in Hackettstown, participating in a series of all day meetings in one of the churches.

Another instance of Benny's loyal friendship was shown when one of the Christian engineers, in an unguarded moment, became intoxicated and was taken off his engine by order of the superintendent.

This gave the scoffers an opportunity of saying: "Oh, they're all alike; I've always said so, and now everybody knows it." Unwisely for one of them, he made such a remark in Benny's presence. Seeing me standing at some distance from them, Benny said to the one who made the statement: "You come with me," as he brought him to where I stood and, tapping me on the breast, he looked the other engineer in the eye and said:

"You say: 'they're all alike'; what's the matter with this man, Tom Keenan?"

"Well, Benny, I must say that I know nothing against Tom. Tom is all right."

"Now, lay your hand on me, and tell me if they're all alike," as he pointed to himself.

"That's so, Benny. I had not thought of you. I don't know of anything against you," and thus one who was ready to rejoice in the downfall of his fellows, by the prompt action of Benny was compelled to eat his own words.

Such a man is Benny Locke, the engineer who runs the Buffalo express train from Hoboken to Scranton on alternate evenings.

Blessed be the mother who in her last days can cherish the memory of such a devoted son!

Blessed be the wife who finds in her husband such devotion to his mother! Blessed be the railroad corporation that has in its employ men of such character, with whom to trust the lives of their passengers and property! Blessed be the passengers who, in retiring to their berths in the sleeping car can feel that at the throttle sits a man whose nerves are not shattered by dissipation, whose mind is free from thought of anything but doing his full duty, save as to-night it reverts to that loved one in yonder cottage on the hill, and whose clear brown eye is ever alert to detect the first approach of danger. Blessed be the railroad men who can call such a man their associate, on whose sympathy they can rely in the hour of sorrow and misfortune and in the purity of whose character and life is found a constant rebuke to evil. The love and friendship of such a man in times of need is worth more than anything in the form of material wealth.

On Monday afternoon, November 16, 1903, the day on which the foregoing words were written, Benny's mother passed away. A few evenings later as the writer stood on the foot-board of the engine with him, while backing down to the train, which on that evening consisted of nine vestibuled cars, he said: "You don't know how I miss my mother. She passed away in my eldest brother's arms and I envied him the privilege. I never had a moment's fear

in running this engine, because I knew that mother was praying for me ; but now it seems strange without her and I can hardly realize that she is not praying for me still."

* * * * *

The passenger who alights from a Lackawanna train at Hoboken, and desires to reach New York by way of the Christopher Street ferry, is apt to step on board the ferry-boat *Paunpeck*. A glance into the engine room, located between the driveways on the boat, will discover there a medium-sized man, with a pleasing countenance and a head of beautiful snow-white silken hair. This genial person, as all who meet him find him to be, is the engineer George W. Rouse.

In 1861, George accepted a position as fireman on the Hoboken ferry and soon afterwards was promoted to engineer, which position he has held for forty-two years, during which time there has not been an accident to his boat resulting in injury or death to a single passenger.

On securing a position on the Hoboken ferry he took up his residence in Hoboken ; but the time occupied in performing his daily duties on the boat allowed him little opportunity to enjoy the society of his beloved wife and the two little ones with which their home had been blessed. Sunday and week-day were alike to boatmen in those days, and the impression prevailed generally that, because of working on Sunday, boat-

men, like railroad men, could not be Christians.

Like a great many men, George thought that a little religion—just enough for appearance sake—might be good for his wife; but he, being a moral man, felt no need of even the appearance of being religious. A good many men are satisfied that their wives shall have all the religion of their home; but the home where neither husband nor wife has a religious experience is indeed to be pitied, and sad to state such was the home George had established.

Arriving home earlier than usual one Sunday, George said to his wife: "Ratie, I will take care of the children this evening so that you can go to church."

"I should like very much to go to church, George, but we are strangers here and I do not know where to go," she answered.

"I understand there is to be a baptism at the Baptist Church, two blocks below; perhaps you would like to go there," he replied.

She went to the Baptist Church that evening and returned home with the conviction that she ought to become a Christian and unite with the church. When she made known to her husband the state of her mind expecting, of course, his encouragement and commendation, she was surprised to find him opposed to what she considered to be her duty. He saw that it meant a division in their tastes, which up to this time had

been as one, and he became jealous lest the church should rob him of her love. For three weeks he endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose, contending that she could be just as good outside the church as in it; but to no avail. After retiring one night, having spent the entire evening in talking the matter over, they continued to discuss it until after midnight. The conversation ceased, and a quiet stillness pervaded the home. Each thought the other asleep; but each of their minds was too fully engaged in a fierce struggle to find rest in sleep. In the brief space of time that had elapsed since their conversation ceased, the struggle had ended, victory had been gained and the quiet stillness of the midnight hour was emblematic of the peace which was soon to fill both their hearts.

Thinking her husband to be asleep, that dear wife, her soul athirst for reconciliation with her heavenly Father, slipped quietly from her bed. He heard her go into the next room and as she lighted a lamp he saw her take her Bible from the shelf and, opening it on the table, he saw her sit down to read its precious contents. From where he was lying in bed in the darkness of the adjoining room, he could see everything she did. Her face was in full view as the light from the lamp fell upon it and upon the book. It seemed as though a new light was now shining on that sweet face—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"—the light from the

word reflected in her face, revealing to him that she was gradually slipping away from him and that he must change her purpose or, it seemed to him, lose her forever. Would he hold her back? Would he thwart that soul whom he loved better than his life in her search for light and truth? She closed the book and, quietly getting on her knees, was about to pray, when, springing from his bed, he was at her side in an instant, saying :

“Wait a moment, Ratie, I can’t let you go alone; I’m going with you,” and with arms entwined they knelt together and dedicated themselves, their little ones and their home to God.

The decision of that critical moment transformed George from a moral, self-centred man into the unselfish, Christian character that has been developing and shedding forth a radiance of holy living and Christian example to all who have come within the circle of his friendship and acquaintance, during a period of forty years. Who can measure the influence of such a life in fidelity to duty, in comforting and helping his fellow men, and in ever seeking to bring men to a knowledge of the love of God, which he gained on his knees at that midnight hour by the side of his beloved wife, given of God to lead him into the light and to encourage and inspire him in everything that would make his life a blessing to others. Is it to be wondered that his associates on the ferry love him? Through all these years he has been *the* one to whom they would natu-

rally turn when in need of a friend. Did one of them lose their position through misfortune or dissipation George Rouse was asked to intercede with the superintendent for their reinstatement. Was one of their number sick, George Rouse was sent for to cheer and pray for them. Is there a death in one of their homes, George Rouse is called in to comfort the mourners and speak words of hope in reference to the one that has gone. Is there misunderstanding between the company and the men, George Rouse is the arbiter of the difficulty. A representative of the ferry is desired on the Board of Management when the Railroad Department of the Young Men's Christian Association is organized, and no one is thought of for such an honour, but George Rouse, and no member of the Board has thrown himself more fully into the work of the Association for fourteen years than he. It is not surprising that Mr. T. E. Clarke, general superintendent of the Lackawanna Railroad in speaking at the anniversary of the Railroad Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association at Binghamton, N. Y., in February, 1903, after listening to an address by Mr. Rouse, who was one of the speakers and had just preceded him, said in reference to the purchase of the Hoboken ferry by the Lackawanna Company: "I am greatly pleased that in the acquisition of the Hoboken ferry by the Lackawanna Company, effected less than a month ago, we have also acquired the serv-

ices of a man of such estimable character as Mr. Rouse, for in him I feel that we have obtained one of the ferry's greatest assets."

For five years there has been a vacant place in George Rouse's heart, a vacant chair is in his home, and a deep sigh escapes him at times. One day, while sitting by her bedside, that dear companion, who had suffered intensely for nearly a year with a painful disease, yet through it all never murmured, said: "George, I feel much better now."

"I am delighted to hear it, Ratie," he answered.

"Yes," she continued, "I have had each of the children here individually and made my requests known to them."

"And what request have you to make of me?" he asked.

"None, George; none whatever. I shall leave everything to your good judgment."

Soon afterwards a heavenly radiance seemed to light up her face; and, looking upward, a vision of the realities of the unseen world was given her, as, rising in her bed, she said:

"The heavenly gates are wide open; all may enter in who will. Oh, isn't it beautiful!"

Turning to her husband, she continued: "Papa, forty years we have been together; God doesn't want me to stay any longer. Don't mourn or have one regret, you have done all that you could. It will be but a little while. Chil-

dren, be good to papa," and laying her head upon the pillow she fell asleep and was gone.

It seems strange that she had no request to make of her husband; but now he understands and is glad that she made none. Had she done so he would have tried to fulfil it. But if for five years George Rouse has shown unusual zeal in Christian work, it is due to the fact that he has endeavoured to do everything that he knows would be pleasing to her.

* * * * *

Such are some of the heroes to whom I would have introduced the newspaper representative, and heroes such as these may be found upon each of the great railroad systems of North America, representing every position in railroad service, from switchman to president.

" Men of thought and reading,
Men of light and leading,
Men of royal breeding,
Freedom's welcome speeding :
Men of faith and not of faction,
Men of lofty aim and action ;

" Men whom highest hope inspires,
Men whom purest honour fires,
Men who trample self beneath them,
Men who make their country wreath them.
Men who never shame their mothers,
Men who never fail their brothers,
True, however false are others :

" Men, who, when the tempest gathers,
Grasp the standard of their fathers.
Men who strike for home and altar,
(Let the coward cringe and falter)
True as truth, though lorn and lonely,
Tender—as the brave are only;
Men who tread where saints have trod,
Men for Country—Home—and God."

XVIII

A RETROSPECT

**Christian Work Among Railroad Men—In the Tunnel—
Off the Track—"He Lives."**

IN the preceding pages I have referred incidentally to the work of the Young Men's Christian Association among railroad men, and, in looking back over a period of thirty years, I realize what a helpful factor in developing the character of railroad men the Railroad Branches of the Association have been. The buildings of these Railroad Branches, located at over two hundred of the important railroad terminals in the United States and Canada represent a work for railroad men that is manifold in its character. They have supplanted the saloon as social centres for railroad men in the communities where they have been established and, for this and other reasons, they are considered by many railroad officials as an indispensable adjunct of the railroad business.

While it is true that railroads are operated by a system of schedules, rules and regulations, the violation of which results in severe penalty to the offenders, it is also true that without helpful environment of a moral and Christian character

the most rigid discipline has been known to fail. Men chafe under restraint, and the severest penalties will not deter some from violating rules, when right motives and principle are lacking. Unless railroad employees are actuated by high moral or Christian principle—preferably the latter—men are apt to become careless and indifferent to the observance of rules and regulations, which carelessness in railroad business is disastrous both to life and property.

Conditions were not improved, in the early days, by discharging a man for violation of the rules, for the man engaged to fill his place had been discharged from some other road for a similar or worse cause. Something was necessary to improve moral conditions among railroad men and this has been found in the organization of the Railroad Brotherhoods and the Railroad Branches of the Young Men's Christian Association, each having come into railroad life and, as a result of which, in cooperation with the discipline of the railroad companies, a higher standard of living is being developed. In the buildings of the Railroad Branches of the Young Men's Christian Association facilities are provided for the comfort and convenience of railroad men that embrace all the appointments of home; not to attract them from their homes, but rather to provide a home for railroad men away from home. For this reason the buildings of the Railroad Branches are looked upon by railroad men as

their second home. Like home they are open and accessible day and night. The keys to the front doors of these "homes" have been lost, so that the buildings are never closed.

The privileges which the men here enjoy in every instance meet a pressing need in their lives. In the first place, after a dusty run, their desire is to "clean up" and the opportunity to do this is afforded in the lavatories and bathrooms. Hunger is appeased in the first-class lunch-rooms and restaurants maintained, where food of the best quality is provided at actual cost. Tired, they find rest in the well-equipped dormitories, at the cost of ten cents for a day's or night's lodging, the amount charged being just sufficient to cover the expense of providing clean linen for the beds. Their leisure time, varying perhaps from two to ten hours, is spent in the social rooms, the social life in the buildings being one of the greatest attractions, where games of different kinds will be found with which to while away the time. For those of more intellectual tastes, the well-kept and well-stocked libraries and reading-rooms, supplied with the best of literature, give ample opportunity for entertainment and the acquiring of knowledge. There are gymnasiums for body building; educational classes for the training of the mind; together with practical talks and lectures on subjects pertinent to their work. There are Bible classes, too, for instruction in right living, and

prayer and gospel meetings where the needs of the spiritual nature of man are ministered to and developed on lines that will make him a better employee, a better companion and a better brother or father.

This work is successful because it meets the needs of railroad men along practical lines and because, through all of these activities, there is a religious motive—without which similar work undertaken heretofore has failed—and a manifestation of the spirit of Jesus Christ, “who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.”

Another element in its success is the fact that it is not a charitable institution, maintained *by* the company *for* the men. It is rather cooperative, the railroad companies by stated contributions, and the men by annual membership fees, sharing almost equally the expense of its maintenance; while the management is almost entirely in the control of the men.

In these buildings men meet as men. No man is antagonized in his religious belief, if he has any; and religion is not forced upon him if he has none. Men are encouraged to be their best for themselves, for their employing company and for their God, not by preaching but by the godly example and precept of the secretaries and of the Christian railroad men associated with them, who unconsciously, but no less surely—like the leaven that leavens the whole—are by their influence transforming the railroad constituency

in every centre where these buildings are located.

To the work of the Young Men's Christian Association among railroad men, appreciated alike by railroad officials and employees, I have given my hearty cooperation and earnest endeavour, for in it I see an arm of the church outstretched to reach and help my fellows, and in its work I hope to be occupied while God lets me live.

While my consignment to "The Scrap Heap," as part of the "worn out" equipment of the railroad, prevents me from being effective as a locomotive engineer, it does not hinder me from being effective in Christian work among railroad men. Each Sabbath still finds me holding forth in some church or Association meeting, telling the old story, which is ever new, of salvation through faith in a Saviour who loves and died for sinners; while on week-day evenings I can often be found in one of the many missions in Newark or New York City, or at one of the army, navy or railroad branches of the Association, bearing testimony to the power of God that has enabled me, for thirty years, to live a godly life; and which, I trust, will keep me to the end.

Let no one think that during the past thirty years I have been free from sore temptations. The sins and indulgences of the old life constantly seeking to assert themselves have been used by

the devil with subtle force to seek to turn me from the paths of righteousness, sobriety and truth. Were it not that at such moments I had learned to seek divine help in such a simple prayer as "Jesus, help me," I should often have been overthrown.

In addition to the aid thus drawn from divine sources I found it necessary at times to resort to various expedients to thwart the devil in his purposes. Strong drink has always been my greatest temptation and the temptation to take a drink,—“just one drink won't hurt you”—comes to me even to this day.

On one occasion when walking along Broad Street, in the city of Newark, all at once an almost overwhelming desire for a drink of liquor took hold upon me; such a desire as men who have been addicted to the liquor habit so often experience and which causes many of them to again become its victims.

Breathing the prayer so often used in such emergencies, I received a ready answer in a most unexpected way, for in glancing upward my eyes fell upon a sign suspended in front of a store bearing this inscription :

Fresh milk. Five cents a glass.

Rushing into the store and addressing the man behind the counter, I said :

“Give me a glass of milk. Quick!”

Fairly snatching the glass from his hand and

pouring its contents down my throat I handed it back to him, saying :

"Give me another !"

This took the same course, when I called for another and another until I had disposed of at least six glasses of the milk. The limit of my capacity must now have been reached and with it I discovered that my thirst for liquor had vanished. By this time the milk merchant was eyeing me with considerable interest, wondering, perhaps, whether I might not demand wholesale rates for the quantity of milk consumed. Paying him in full at the rate of "five cents a glass," I walked out of the store remarking—not to the merchant—"There, old devil, I got the better of you that time," and went on my way, rejoicing in a new victory.

An experience in my early Christian life has always been a source of great helpfulness to me, and to it I attribute, in great measure, my unbounded faith in God. While going through the tunnel, one day, the engine, as is usual, was completely enveloped in smoke, so that I could see nothing. The throttle was open, my hand being on the throttle lever, the train speeding on in the darkness. Thus proceeding I was led to commune with myself, as follows :

"Tom, you can't see ahead."

"No," I answered.

"Then why don't you stop ?"

"If I stop I will remain in darkness and

may cause disaster to a train following, but if I keep the throttle open and continue to proceed in the darkness, I will soon come out into the light."

The spiritual application of this experience was at once apparent to me, and I then and there concluded that though I could not always see the way, or, with my vision, pierce the darkness of doubt or sorrow that might envelop me for the time being, I would with a firm faith in God keep going on, knowing that in a short time He would bring me out into the light. This experience, together with the determination that if I ever fell from grace, or got "off the track," I would at once turn to God and seek His forgiveness, has been a source of great helpfulness and encouragement to me all through my Christian life.

Speaking of getting off the track recalls an incident that happened one day as I was bringing the train to a stop at the South Orange station. Just as the train stopped the forward engine truck left the rails. Sitting in the engine cab for a moment or two before getting down to investigate, I noticed a young woman standing by the track who looked alternately at the engine truck and then at me. Addressing her, I said :

"Young lady, what's the matter?"

"Why, sir, you are off the track," she answered.

Quick as thought I responded :

"Will you promise me that if ever you get 'off the track' you will get back on again?"

"I will, sir," she replied. Within a week from that time I learned that the dear girl lost her life in a fire in that place.

While it is easy, at times, to get off the track, the best and only thing to do under such circumstances is to get on again. This applies to the spiritual, as well as to the material, railroad. On the occasion referred to we simply got a couple of "replacers" and putting them in conjunction with the wheels and the track, I gave three toots of the whistle, implying that we would back up, and applying steam, in an instant, we were back upon the rails again. Many men get "off the track" and some who do so are inclined to remain there, but to such my advice has always been, to by all means "back up" and get on again.

Within two years I shall have completed the allotted time of man upon earth, so that at most my time on this mortal sphere is short. Whether Mira or I shall first be called to that reunion which is eternal I cannot foretell. We bide the time here, each possessed of a blessed hope in Him who said: "He that believeth in Me though he were dead yet shall he live and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die!"

Thirty years have elapsed since that eventful moment on the engine when God spoke peace to